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# GEMS *of the* WORLD'S BEST CLASSICS

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Known Radio Commentator, Author of *With  
Lawrence In Arabia, Raiders of the Deep, Count  
Luckner—The Sea Devil, The Wreck of the  
Dumaru, Lauterbach of the China Sea*, and others.

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**CHICAGO**



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## YOU WILL LIKE THIS—READ IT!

**P**RESUMABLY we read a preface before we read the book it accompanies, if we read a preface at all. Contrarily the time to write a preface is after reading the book. Yet some read prefaces last, and I'll write one first—before the reading.

I sat down with the proofs of this anthology, prepared to read and then preface. I scanned the Table of Contents, the revealing pages of any anthology. I intended to dip in and sample, browsing here and there among the tales of many nations and divers times. I saw listed so many things to catch the fancy that merely to brood over them was an amusing enjoyment. Then and there I had an impulse to write a preface.

I saw listed a story with the title redolent of the Orient, author Georges Clemenceau. That made me recall how I had seen the Tiger of France at the Versailles Peace Conference, fierce player of world politics—but then in France a politician is likely to be a litterateur.

I saw the titles of tales by Heinrich Heine and E. T. A. Hoffman. Heine, with mockery twisting a sentimental smile—I have never read enough of him. Hoffman, historic master and innovator in the telling of romantic tales—but how many of us now-a-days have read a single Hoffman story.


I saw listed—"To His Wife After the Separation" by George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron. What had Byron, the badly behaving, badly rhyming genius to say to his wife after the separation? Another author—that romantic novelist so renowned in his time, known to statecraft as Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield. What account had Ben Johnson written about Shakespeare? That also was catalogued in the Table of Contents. Ben and Will, reminiscence of tavern and theatre.

Should you like to read a tale by Machiavelli? It was there, the world master of cynical statecraft spinning a love story. What did Cicero write to Caesar while the future master of the world was campaigning in Gaul? That was one of the stories. And Benjamin Franklin talking to his big toe—title, "A Dialogue with the Gout."

Full and copious the list, from Boccacio to De Maupassant, from Aesop to Dostoevski, with those curios to add a tang of the odd to the writings of the great.

At the end of the Table of Contents, arranged according to nations, the last item held the eye: Ancient Egypt, Setna and the Magic Book—Anonymous. Anonymous indeed. Some dim tale of Thoth or Amen-Ra told when the Paraohs were lords of the Nile.

Musing over the listed titles of an anthology, an old familiar pleasure. I indulged in it rather excessively this time, fancy caught by singular beguiling bits. Now, having written this, I will read them.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lowell Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive style, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

P. S.—Having read them, I now am going to start at the beginning and do it all over again. I would like to keep this book at my side for the rest of my days—and nights.

## YOUR PUBLISHER SPEAKS

THE magnetism that is Thomas' comes from a strong and yet simple personality, developed through a vigorously active life—drama enacted upon stages and scenes as constantly varied as boyhood days in a Colorado gold mining camp, cow punching in the same state, reporter and managing editor of a newspaper, law student at Princeton, camera man on the Western Front and, lately, news commentator over a national chain having addressed more people on matters of a semi-serious nature than any man that ever lived. His talks are not only heard throughout the United States and Canada, but are listened to in South America, Central America, at sea, and in the far North, by a total of 20,000,000 people.

Here is a man who prefers his breakfast in riding boots, hunts rattlesnakes, loves horses and, above all, adventure, who runs a local baseball team, and still has no ax to grind.

As a writer of adventure books, he is perhaps best known as historian of the World War, author of "With Lawrence in Arabia", "Raiders of the Deep", "Count Luckner, the Sea Devil", "The Wreck of the Dumaru", "Woodfill of the Regulars", "European Skyways", and "Lauterbach of the China Sea".

As a traveler, he is best known for his books, "India, Land of the Black Pagoda", "Beyond Khyber Pass", and "The First World Flight".

The stuffy, stodgy term, "classic", so appalling from the days of our English courses, will take on a new meaning—a zest and a vitality hitherto lacking—to the the reader of this selection.

Here are the choices made to suit the simple, unspoiled, home loving, sport loving man—for him who has faced difficulties and come up smiling, for the man of the masses, as also for him who "walks with kings", for the adventurer, and for the fool, this group will have some laughs, many surprises, a few shocks, and not a few curses. We believe in stories that give a kick—a reaction indefinable and yet conspicuous if absent. Each one of these has its own peculiar jolt, and most of these will come in the form of that elusive "kick".

For students of both sexes, and for English departments of schools, this work is authoritatively recommended and cordially presented.



## GIACOMO LEOPARDI

1798-1837

Born at Recanati, a little Italian town, of a noble but impoverished family. At the age of ten undertook his own education, and at twelve wrote philological treatises that astonished the world. At twenty-four went to Rome, then to Bologna and other Italian cities, where he supported himself by teaching and writing. His vast intellectual schemes were frustrated by constant sickness. The writings he has left us are only the sparks from the mighty furnace of his mind.

### STORY OF THE HUMAN RACE

**I**T IS said that all men who in the beginning peopled the earth were created everywhere at the same time, and all infants, and were nourished by bees, goats, and doves, in the manner that the poets fabled of the rearing of Jove; and that the earth was much smaller than it is now, nearly all the regions level, the sky without stars, the sea not yet formed; and that there appeared in the world much less variety and magnificence than it now possesses. But nevertheless mankind, taking inexhaustible delight in regarding and considering heaven and earth, wondering at them beyond measure, and accounting the one and the other most beautiful, and not merely vast, but infinite in extent as in majesty and loveliness; nourishing themselves, moreover, with the most joyous hopes, and drawing from every sensation of their life incredible pleasures, grew up with much content, and believed themselves to be almost completely happy. Having thus fulfilled very sweetly childhood and early adolescence, and reached maturer age, they began to experience some change. For the hopes, whose fruition until then they had gone on putting off from day to day, not being realized, they began to lose faith in them; and to content themselves with what they actually enjoyed, without the prospect of any increase of good, seemed to be against their nature, particularly as the aspect of natural things and every part of their daily life, whether by long usage or because the first vivacity of their minds was diminished, became much less delightful and grateful than in the beginning. They wandered about the earth visiting the most remote regions, since they could easily do so, the districts being level, and not divided by seas, nor obstructed by



other difficulties; and after some years most of them perceived that the earth, although great, was not so vast as to be without well-defined limits; and that all the parts of it, and all its inhabitants, with but slight differences, were similar one to another. Wherefore their discontent so increased, that they had not yet outgrown their youth, when a distaste for their own being became universal amongst them. And step by step in their maturity and yet more in their declining years, satiety being converted into hatred, some of them arrived at such desperation that not enduring the light and the life, which they had at first loved so much, they spontaneously, some in one mode and some in another, ended their existence.

It seemed dreadful to the gods that living creatures should prefer death to life, and destroy themselves without being compelled by any unavoidable circumstance or extreme necessity. It cannot be told how much they marvelled that their gifts should be accounted so vile and abominable that men should with all their force renounce and reject them; since they believed they had put in the world so much good and beauty, and such regulations and conditions that this dwelling-place ought to be not only endured but loved by all animals whatsoever, and most of all by men whose race they had formed with singular care and wonderful excellence. But at the same time, besides being touched with no little pity for the human misery which was so sadly manifested, they even doubted whether, those grievous examples being renewed and multiplied, the human species in a short while, in spite of destiny, would not wholly perish, and the world be deprived of that perfection which accrued to it from our race, and themselves of those honors they received from mankind.

Jove therefore resolved to improve, as improvement seemed needful, the conditions of human life, and to provide it with additional means for attaining felicity. Men chiefly complained, he found, that things were not immense in greatness, nor infinite in beauty, perfection, and variety, as they had deemed at first; but were indeed very limited, all imperfect, and nearly uniform; and that, complaining not only of their age, but of their maturity, and even of their youth, and desiring the delights of their earliest years, men ardently prayed to be reconverted to childhood, and in that condition to remain all their lives. In which Jove could not satisfy them, it being contrary to the universal laws of nature,

and to those functions and uses which mankind ought, according to the divine intention and decrees, to exercise and fulfil. Nor could he communicate his own infinity to mortal creatures, nor make matter infinite, nor infinite the perfection and felicity of things and men. However, he thought it expedient to extend the limits of the creation, and to further adorn and vary it; and having thus resolved, he enlarged the earth on every side, and poured into it the sea, with the object of diversifying the world's appearance by its interposition between the various inhabited regions, and of preventing men, by the difficulties of navigation, from too easily discovering its limits, while giving to the eye at the same time a vivid impression of immensity. At which period the new waters occupied the land of Atlantis, and not only it, but also other innumerable and very extensive tracts, although of that only the memory remains, preserved through countless ages in story and legend. Many districts he depressed, many filled up by raising mountains and hills, sprinkled the night with stars, refined and purified the nature of the air, increased the clearness and light of the day, heightened and proportioned more diversely the colors of the heavens and the landscapes; and mixed the generations of mankind so that the old age of some fell in the same time as the youth and childhood of others. And having determined to multiply the appearances of that infinitude which men so ardently desired (since he could not gratify them with the reality), and wishing to cherish and nourish their imaginations, from which, he well knew, chiefly arose the great happiness of their childhood, he adopted many other expedients similar to that of the seas; such as the creation of Echo, which he concealed in valleys and caverns. He filled the forests with the deep and hollow voices of the winds, whose motions at the same time caused a continual undulation of the tree-tops. He created likewise the brood of dreams, and charged them that, illuding under many forms the minds of men, they should figure to them that plentitude of unintelligible felicity, which even he could not create, and those confused and indeterminate imaginings, which, being without any substantial prototypes, could not be realized, however much men might yearn for them, and however willing Jove might otherwise be to gratify their longings.

By these provisions of Jove the spirit of man was refreshed and renovated, and the charm and sweetness of life were in every-

one restored, so that they once more felt, loved, and admired the beauty and immensity of earthly things. And this good state lasted longer than the first, chiefly because of the intervals between the times of birth which Jove had introduced, so that those whom experience of life had chilled and wearied were refreshed by the sight of the warmth and hopefulness of the young. But in process of time, the novelty being quite gone, the tedium and disesteem of life returned stronger than before, and men sank into such dejection that it is believed the custom then began which is recorded in histories as practised by certain ancient peoples, namely, that when a child was born the parents and friends of the family assembled to mourn over the event; but when a death occurred the day was consecrated to rejoicings and congratulatory discourses. At last all mortals became infected with impiety, either because they believed themselves to be abandoned by Jove, or because it is the very nature of misery to harden and corrupt even the dispositions most inclined to goodness. For they are altogether wrong who think that human infelicity was first born from the iniquities of men and their offences against the gods. On the contrary, the ill-conduct of men first arose from nothing else but their calamities.

After the gods had punished the insolence of mortals with the deluge of Deucalion, and taken vengeance for their outrages, the two survivors of the universal destruction of our species, Deucalion and Pyrrha, convinced that nothing more fortunate for the human race could happen than that it should be wholly extinguished, seated themselves upon the summit of a cliff, and vehemently called upon death to release them from the burden of existence—so far were they from fearing or deploring the common lot. Nevertheless, admonished by Jove once more to people the earth, and not enduring, in consequence of their wretchedness and their disdain of life, the work of generation, they took stones from the mountain, as the gods instructed them, and casting these over their shoulders restored the human species. But Jove had become aware by what had passed of the true nature of men; and that it does not suffice them, like other animals, merely to live exempt from pain and physical suffering; but that, desiring always and in whatever condition the impossible, they torment themselves the more with imaginary evils the less they are afflicted with real ones. He therefore resolved to avail himself

of other arts to conserve this miserable race; the chief of which were these two. The one was to inflict upon them real evils; the other to involve their lives in a thousand businesses and labors, so as to occupy them and divert them as much as possible from communion with their own mind, or at least from desiring that unknown and impossible felicity. Wherefore he began by diffusing among them a multitude of diseases and an infinite number of other misfortunes, in which his intention was, by varying the conditions and fortunes of human life, to prevent satiety by leading men to appreciate more highly their real blessings owing to the contrast between them and the evils from which they were now to suffer; and moreover to so accustom their minds to wretchedness that the lack of positive pleasure in life, which they had hitherto found so hard to support, might now become much more tolerable to them. It was also his intention to break and tame the ferocity of mankind by compelling them to bow the neck and yield to necessity, thus inducing them to be more content with their lot, and curbing the vehemence of their desires no less by physical infirmities than by mental sufferings. And moreover he knew that it must come to pass that men oppressed by diseases and calamities would be less ready than heretofore to turn their hands against themselves, because they would be cowed and prostrated in spirit, as results from the habitude of suffering. For those who suffer are usually sanguine of an improvement in their condition, and therefore desire to live, believing that they would be altogether happy could they overcome the evils which afflict them; and this they always hope to do since their nature so persuades them.

Then Jove created the tempests of wind and rain, armed himself with thunder and lightning, gave to Neptune the trident, put the comets in revolution, and ordained the eclipses; with these things and with other terrible signs and effects meaning to terrify mortals from time to time, knowing that fear and present dangers would reconcile to life, at least for short periods, not only the unhappy, but those even who most detested it, and were most inclined to flee from it.

Then, in order to cure the former indolence of men, he induced in them the need and the appetite for new kinds of food and drink, which could not be procured without much and heavy toil; whereas before the deluge men quenched their thirst with

water only, and fed on the herbs and fruits which the earth and the trees ministered to them spontaneously, and on other simple aliments, such as even now some uncivilized peoples live upon, and particularly the inhabitants of California. He assigned to the different regions of the earth different climatic conditions, and divided the year into the four seasons. And whereas, up to that period, the earth's temperature had at all times been so uniformly benign and pleasant that men had never felt the need of clothing, they were now compelled to provide themselves with it, in order that they might thus at the cost of much labor counteract the mutations and the inclemency of the weather.

He entrusted to Mercury the task of founding the first cities, and of introducing rivalries and discords among men by dividing them into peoples and nations, and by giving them different languages. Jove instructed him also to teach men song and those other arts, which both on account of their nature and origin were and still are called divine. He himself gave laws, conditions, and civil ordinances to the new peoples; and finally, wishing to bless them with an incomparable gift, he sent among them certain phantasms of most excellent and superhuman aspect, to whom he delegated to a great extent the government and guidance of our race. These were called Justice, Virtue, Glory, Patriotism, and the like. Among them was one named Love, who like the rest, then first came upon earth; for before clothing came into use the sexes had been drawn towards each other, not by the sentiment of love, but by that impetus of desire which has at all times governed the brutes; and which, like the desire for food, depends upon appetite alone, and not upon any higher feeling.

It was wonderful how much fruit these divine decrees bore for human life, and how much the new condition of men, notwithstanding the toils, the terrors, and the sufferings—things before then unknown to our race—surpassed in comfort and sweetness that which had existed before the deluge. And this result proceeded in great part from those wonderful phantasms, which men accounted now genii, now gods, and followed and worshipped with incredible fervor, and with vast and astonishing labors for a very long period; being chiefly excited thereto by their most celebrated poets and artists, at whose instigation many mortals did not hesitate to sacrifice their blood or their lives to these imaginary beings, now to one of them and now to another. And

this, far from offending Jove, pleased him beyond measure, because, among other reasons, he judged that men must be so much the less willing to throw life away voluntarily as they were the more ready to spend it for noble and glorious causes. These good ordinances greatly exceeded in effect and duration the precedent ones; since, although their efficacy gradually declined and at last altogether disappeared, their influence lasted so long that down to a period not far distant from the present age, human life, almost entirely happy at first, remained for many ages easy enough or at least endurable.

The decline of this comparatively happy condition of mankind was due to various causes; among which may be mentioned the many inventions which men discovered to provide easily and quickly for their needs; the great increase in the disparity of conditions and functions instituted among them by Jove when he founded the first republics; the indolence and vanity that through these causes, after a long exile, again became prevalent; the fact that, partly owing to the nature of things, and partly because of the indifference induced by familiarity, men were no longer sensible of the variety in life which Jove had established, a result which always happens after long habitude; and lastly to other grave causes, which, as they have been described and expounded by other writers, I will not now dwell upon. Certain it is that men again felt that disgust with their lot which had afflicted them before the deluge, and that they longed once more for that impossible felicity which is alike unknown and alien to the nature of the universe.

But the total revolution of their fortune and the end of that state which we are now wont to call antique, arose chiefly from a cause different from those already mentioned: and it was this: Among those phantasms so much esteemed by the ancients was one called in their tongues Wisdom; which, being honored universally like all its companions, and being followed in particular by many, had no less than the others contributed its share to the prosperity of the past ages. This phantasm many and many times, indeed daily, had promised and vowed to its followers that it would show them Truth, which it said was a very great genius and its own master, never yet seen upon the earth, but dwelling with the gods in heaven; whence Wisdom promised that by its own authority and favor it should be brought down to earth, and

induced for some time to reside among men. By commerce and familiarity with this Truth the human race would gain such profundity of knowledge, so excellent a system of government, such good manners, and such a degree of happiness that its condition would almost compare with that of the gods. But how could a mere shadow and empty semblance realize its promises, much more bring Truth to earth? So that men after very long believing and trusting grew aware of the vanity of these promises; yet being always avid for new things, especially through the indolence in which they lived; and stimulated partly by the ambition to rival the gods, and partly by the desire of that beatitude which the phantasm had promised them would be obtained by conversation with Truth, they demanded from Jove, with as much importunity as presumption, that he should, for some time at least, allow this most noble of spirits to take up its residence on earth; at the same time upbraiding the deity for envying them the benefits which they would derive from its presence, and renewing their ancient and odious lamentations of the littleness and poverty of their condition. And because these specious phantasms, the source of so much benefit to the preceding ages, were now held by the majority in small esteem; not that men had yet discovered their illusory character, but because the general baseness of thought and looseness of manners was such that hardly anyone was now influenced by them; they, blaspheming the greatest boon which the Immortals had made or could make to them, cried out that the earth was only thought worthy of the presence of the inferior genii; while the greater, to whose authority men would willingly bow, were not allowed or permitted to visit this despised portion of the universe.

Many things had already for a long time alienated the goodwill of Jove from men; and among others the unparalleled vices and misdeeds, which for number and enormity had left far behind the wickedness which had been punished by the deluge. He was thoroughly disgusted, after so many trials, with the restless, insatiable, immoderate human nature, which he now saw that nothing could render tranquil, not to say happy; since no provisions for its welfare contented it, no condition pleased it, and no country satisfied it. Even though he had been willing to augment a thousandfold the dimensions and pleasures of the world and the universe, mankind, always desirous, although incapable,

of infinity, would quickly find these new conditions narrow, unlovely, and of little value. But at last these foolish and haughty demands so stirred the wrath of Jove that he determined, putting aside all pity, to punish forever the human race, condemning it for all time to miseries much graver than those of the past. To which end he not only resolved to send Truth to stay among men for some time as they asked, but to give it eternal domicile among them, making it their perpetual director and lord: and at the same time withdrawing from earth those gracious phantasms which he had placed there.

The other gods were astonished at this decision, which, it seemed to them, was likely to lead to the undue exaltation of our condition and the prejudice of their superiority. But Jove caused them to change their opinion by proving to them that not all the genii, even the great, are essentially beneficent, and that such is not the character of Truth, and that it would not produce the same results among men as among themselves. For whereas it made manifest to the immortals their own beatitude, it would, on the contrary, discover to men and place more clearly before their eyes their own infelicity; proving to them, moreover, that their condition was no incidental or accidental circumstance, but was due to the very nature of things, and was such as they could by no means remedy or escape from. And most human evils being of such a nature that they are evil in the proportion that they are believed to be so by those who suffer from them, and more or less grave according to their opinion of them, it was easy to judge how harmful the presence of Truth amongst men must be; since by its means nothing will appear more profoundly true than the falsity of all human blessings, and they will realize the vanity of everything except their own suffering. For these reasons they will be even bereft of hope, with which from the beginning until now, more than with any other joy or comfort whatever, they have supported life. And hoping nothing, nor seeing any worthy object to strive or labor for, they will fall into such a state of indifference and abhorrence towards all worthy and elevated aims that the condition of the living will differ but little from that of the dead. But in this condition of despair and inactivity they will be still tormented by that desire for boundless felicity which is inseparable from their nature, and which will sting and torment them more than ever because it will no longer be mitigated or dis-



tracted by a variety of cares or of active employments. At the same time they will be deprived of the solace derived from imagination, which alone was able in some degree to satisfy their cravings after that impossible and incomprehensible felicity which is unattainable either by gods or men, however much they may yearn for it. And (continued Jove) all those semblances of infinity which I have placed in the world to illude and nourish them, according to their desires, with vague and shadowy aspirations will become ineffective, because of the new ideas and new methods of thinking which Truth will teach them. So that if the earth and the universe have heretofore seemed small to men, they will now appear quite insignificant, since the arcana of nature will be opened and revealed to them; and these, contrary to their present expectations, will seem so much the narrower in proportion as their knowledge of them becomes greater. Finally, its phantasms having been withdrawn from the earth through the teachings of Truth, by which men will gain acquaintance with the nature of men, all valor and rectitude of thought and of deed will die out of human life, and men will no longer pride themselves on their love of their country, but will again, as at the beginning, account themselves citizens of the world, making professions of universal love towards all their species, though in reality the race will consist no longer of communities, but of individuals; and these, having no native country to be specially loved and no foreign one to hate, everyone will hate everybody else and love himself alone. From which condition of things, how many and how great troubles will surely spring it would be infinite to recount. Yet in spite of all their infelicities men will not have courage enough to end their existence, because the influence of Truth will render them not less despicable than miserable; and adding beyond measure to the bitterness of life will take from them the will to renounce it.

Jove having thus declared his intentions, it appeared to the gods that our fate would be much more cruel and terrible than it was consonant with the divine mercy to permit. But Jove went on to say that he was disposed, while removing all the other phantasms, to leave them the one called Love, from which they would derive some slight comfort. And it would not be allowed to Truth, although most powerful and continually opposing it, to drive Love from the earth, or to vanquish it, save rarely. Thus

the life of man, equally occupied in the worship of Love and of Truth, will be divided into two parts, and the phantasm and the genii will share between them the empire over the affairs and thoughts of mortals. Most men will be solicitous about these alone, save some few things of very minor importance. In old age the want of the consolations of love will be compensated by a kind of passive contentment with existence, such as is seen in the lower animals, and men will cherish life for its own sake merely, and not because of any joy or comfort which they derive from it.

Thus having withdrawn from earth the blessed phantasms, saving only Love, the least noble of all, Jove sent among men Truth, and gave it with them perpetual residence and lordship. Whence followed all those lamentable effects which he had foreseen. And one very marvelous thing resulted: that whereas Truth before its arrival on earth, when it had no power or commerce with men, had been honored by them with a very great number of temples and sacrifices; now that it was come upon earth with royal authority, and began to be known face to face, it so afflicted the minds of men and smote them with such horror that they, although forced to obey it, altogether refused to adore it, contrary to the case of all other celestial beings, which are the more venerated the more they are known. And while the phantasms of Justice, Glory, Virtue, and Patriotism were wont to be most loved and honored by those over whom their influence was greatest, this genius excited the fiercest maledictions and the deepest hatred from those over whom it exercised the greatest power. But not being able to evade or resist its tyranny, mortals lived in that supreme misery which they endure now, and always must endure.

However, that pity, which in the minds of celestials is never extinguished, moved Jove not long since to take again into consideration the unhappy state of mankind, more especially because he saw that those among them who were most remarkable for their high intelligence, their noble sentiments, and their integrity of conduct were, above all others, afflicted by the power and hard domination of Truth. It was the custom of the gods in the ancient days, when Justice, Virtue, and the other phantasms governed human affairs, to visit sometimes their dominions, now one and now another, descending to earth and manifesting their

presence in various ways, their visits always bringing some great benefit either to all mortals or to some one in particular. But when life had once more become corrupted and sunk in every kind of wickedness, they disdained for a very long time to hold any intercourse with men. At last, Jove, compassionating our extreme infelicity, asked the gods whether any of them were disposed to visit mankind, as they had formerly been accustomed to do, to comfort them in their misery, and especially those among them who showed themselves deserving of a better fate. Whereon, all the others keeping silent, Love, the son of the Celestial Venus, like in name to the phantasm thus called, but in nature, virtue, and actions most unlike, moved by that spirit of compassion which distinguishes him above all the gods, offered himself to undertake the mission proposed by Jove, and to descend from heaven, whence never before had he withdrawn himself, since he was so ineffably dear to the gods that they had never before allowed him to depart from their society even for an instant. It is true, indeed, that many of the ancients, deceived by the transformations and divers frauds of the phantasm called by the same name, believed themselves to have received from time to time tokens of the presence of the great god amongst them; but it is certain that he never visited mortals before they were subjected to the domination of Truth. And since that time he has only very rarely descended to earth, and for brief periods; partly because of the general unworthiness of the human race, and partly because the gods could hardly endure his absence. When he does visit the earth he takes up his abode in the amiable and tender hearts of generous and magnanimous persons, and diffuses therein, for the short period he remains, a strange and wonderful serenity, and fills them with affections so noble, and of such virtue and force, that they experience a sensation hitherto unknown to them, namely, a feeling of real beatitude, and not a mere illusive semblance of it. Sometimes, though all too rarely, he unites two such hearts, which he binds together by inducing in them a reciprocal ardor and desire. This happy condition is often fervently prayed for by those who have once been favored by the god; but Jove seldom permits him to gratify their desires, because the felicity arising from such a blessing resembles too nearly that of the deities themselves. But merely to experience in one's self the presence of this di-

vinity is a happiness such as transcends all others that have ever been known to mankind. Where Love is, around him although seen only by those whom he favors, are congregated those beautiful phantasms which Jove banished from earth, but which Love brings back again. For this he has Jove's permission; nor can Truth, though most hostile to these phantasms, and greatly resenting their reappearance, resist their influence, for the genii may not dispute the will of the gods. And inasmuch as the fates endowed Love with eternal youth, so in consonance with his nature he fulfils in some degree that first desire of men, which was that they might have their youth restored to them. For in the minds which he elects to inhabit he revives and makes green again, whilst he remains there, the infinite hope and the beautiful and dear imaginations of their tender years. Many mortals, ignorant of and incapable of his delights, continually mock and slander him with unbridled audacity; but he is deaf to their insults, and if he heard would not punish them, being by nature so mild and magnanimous. And, moreover, the immortals, satisfied with the vengeance they have taken on all our species, and the incurable misery which afflicts it, heed not the particular offenses of man; nor are the fraudulent and the unjust and the contemners of the gods otherwise specially punished than by being, even by their very nature, alienated from the divine grace.

## NICCOLO DI BERNARDO DEI MACHIAVELLI

1469-1527

This famous Italian statesman and political philosopher was born in Florence of a distinguished family. He held high state offices, and undertook important missions to Paris, Rome, Vienna and other capitals, where he acquired the knowledge of contemporary rulers and inner methods of government and diplomacy which he later turned to account in his writings on statecraft. In 1512 he was exiled from Florence on the charge of conspiracy, and at this time began to write, partly for diversion, partly in the hope of being recalled to active diplomacy. He was eventually restored to political favor. His most important work, "The Prince," has been the cause of endless controversy. He wrote also a number of comedies and short stories, of which latter the following is an excellent example.

### BELPHAGOR

WE read in the ancient archives of Florence the following account, as it was received from the lips of a very holy man, greatly respected by every one for the sanctity of his manners at the period in which he lived. Happening once to be deeply absorbed in his prayers, such was their efficacy, that he saw an infinite number of condemned souls, belonging to those miserable mortals who had died in their sins, undergoing the punishment due to their offenses in the regions below. He remarked that the greater part of them lamented nothing so bitterly as their folly in having taken wives, attributing to them the whole of their misfortunes. Much surprised at this, Minos and Rhadamanthus, with the rest of the infernal judges, unwilling to credit all the abuse heaped upon the female sex, and wearied from day to day with its repetition, agreed to bring the matter before Pluto. It was then resolved that the conclave of infernal princes should form a committee of inquiry, and should adopt such measures as might be deemed most advisable by the court in order to discover the truth or falsehood of the calumnies which they heard. All being assembled in council, Pluto addressed them as follows: "Dearly beloved demons! Though by celestial dispensation and the irreversible decree of fate this kingdom fell to my share, and I might strictly dispense with any kind of celestial or earthly responsibility, yet, as it is more prudent and respectful to consult the laws and to hear the

opinion of others, I have resolved to be guided by your advice, particularly in a case that may chance to cast some imputation upon our government. For the souls of all men daily arriving in our kingdom still continue to lay the whole blame upon their wives, and as this appears to us impossible, we must be careful how we decide in such a business, lest we also should come in for a share of their abuse, on account of our too great severity; and yet judgment must be pronounced, lest we be taxed with negligence and with indifference to the interests of justice. Now, as the latter is the fault of a careless, and the former of an unjust judge, we, wishing to avoid the trouble and the blame that might attach to both, yet hardly seeing how to get clear of it, naturally enough apply to you for assistance, in order that you may look to it, and contrive in some way that, as we have hitherto reigned without the slightest imputation upon our character, we may continue to do so for the future."

The affair appearing to be of the utmost importance to all the princes present, they first resolved that it was necessary to ascertain the truth, though they differed as to the best means of accomplishing this object. Some were of opinion that they ought to choose one or more from among themselves, who should be commissioned to pay a visit to the world, and in a human shape endeavor personally to ascertain how far such reports were grounded in truth. To many others it appeared that this might be done without much trouble merely by compelling some of the wretched souls to confess the truth by the application of a variety of tortures. But the majority being in favor of a journey to the world, they abided by the former proposal. No one, however, being ambitious of undertaking such a task, it was resolved to leave the affair to chance. The lot fell upon the arch-devil Belphagor, who, previous to the Fall, had enjoyed the rank of arch-angel in a higher world. Though he received his commission with a very ill grace, he nevertheless felt himself constrained by Pluto's imperial mandate, and prepared to execute whatever had been determined upon in council. At the same time he took an oath to observe the tenor of his instructions, as they had been drawn up with all due solemnity and ceremony for the purpose of his mission. These were to the following effect:—*Imprimis*, that the better to promote the object in view, he should be furnished with a hundred thousand gold ducats; secondly, that he

should make use of the utmost expedition in getting into the world; thirdly, that after assuming the human form he should enter into the marriage state; and lastly, that he should live with his wife for the space of ten years. At the expiration of this period, he was to feign death and return home, in order to acquaint his employers, by the fruits of experience, what really were the respective conveniences and inconveniences of matrimony. The conditions further ran, that during the said ten years he should be subject to all kinds of miseries and disasters, like the rest of mankind, such as poverty, prisons, and diseases into which men are apt to fall, unless, indeed, he could contrive by his own skill and ingenuity to avoid them. Poor Belphagor having signed these conditions and received the money, forthwith came into the world, and having set up his equipage, with a numerous train of servants, he made a very splendid entrance into Florence. He selected this city in preference to all others, as being most favorable for obtaining an usurious interest of his money; and having assumed the name of Roderigo, a native of Castile, he took a house in the suburbs of Ognissanti. And because he was unable to explain the instructions under which he acted, he gave out that he was a merchant, who having had poor prospects in Spain, had gone to Syria, and succeeded in acquiring his fortune at Aleppo, whence he had lastly set out for Italy, with the intention of marrying and settling there, as one of the most polished and agreeable countries he knew.

Roderigo was certainly a very handsome man, apparently about thirty years of age, and he lived in a style of life that showed he was in pretty easy circumstances, if not possessed of immense wealth. Being, moreover, extremely affable and liberal, he soon attracted the notice of many noble citizens blessed with large families of daughters and small incomes. The former of these were soon offered to him, from among whom Roderigo chose a very beautiful girl of the name of Onesta, a daughter of Amerigo Donati, who had also three sons, all grown up, and three more daughters, also nearly marriageable. Though of a noble family and enjoying a good reputation in Florence, his father-in-law was extremely poor, and maintained as poor an establishment. Roderigo, therefore, made very splendid nuptials, and omitted nothing that might tend to confer honor upon such a festival, being liable, under the law which he received on leaving his infernal

abode, to feel all kinds of vain and earthly passions. He therefore soon began to enter into all the pomps and vanities of the world, and to aim at a reputation and consideration among mankind, which put him to no little expense. But more than this, he had not long enjoyed the society of his beloved Onesta, before he became tenderly attached to her, and was unable to behold her suffer the slightest inquietude or vexation. Now, along with her other gifts of beauty and nobility, the lady had brought into the house of Roderigo such an insufferable portion of pride, that in this respect Lucifer himself could not equal her; for her husband, who had experienced the effects of both, was at no loss to decide which was the more intolerable of the two. Yet it became infinitely worse when she discovered the extent of Roderigo's attachment to her, of which she availed herself to obtain an ascendancy over him and rule him with a rod of iron. Not content with this, when she found he would bear it, she continued to annoy him with all kinds of insults and taunts, in such a way as to give him the most indescribable pain and uneasiness. For what with the influence of her father, her brothers, her friends, and relatives, the duty of the matrimonial yoke, and the love he bore her, he suffered all for some time with the patience of a saint. It would be useless to recount the follies and extravagances into which he ran in order to gratify her taste for dress, and every article of the newest fashion, in which our city, ever so variable in its nature, according to its usual habits, so much abounds. Yet, to live upon easy terms with her, he was obliged to do more than this; he had to assist his father-in-law in portioning off his other daughters; and she next asked him to furnish one of her brothers with goods to sail for the Levant, another with silks for the West, while a third was to be set up in a goldbeater's establishment at Florence. In such objects the greatest part of his fortune was soon consumed. At length the Carnival season was at hand; the festival of St. John was to be celebrated, and the whole city, as usual, was in a ferment. Numbers of the noblest families were about to vie with each other in the splendor of their parties, and the Lady Onesta, being resolved not to be outshone by her acquaintance, insisted that Roderigo should exceed them all in the richness of their feasts. For the reasons above stated, he submitted to her will; nor, indeed, would he have scrupled at doing much more, however



difficult it might have been, could he have flattered himself with a hope of preserving the peace and comfort of his household, and of awaiting quietly the consummation of his ruin. But this was not the case, inasmuch as the arrogant temper of his wife had grown to such a height of asperity by long indulgence, that he was at a loss in what way to act. His domestics, male and female, would no longer remain in the house, being unable to support for any length of time the intolerable life they led. The inconvenience which he suffered in consequence of having no one to whom he could entrust his affairs it is impossible to express. Even his own familiar devils, whom he had brought along with him, had already deserted him, choosing to return below rather than submit longer to the tyranny of his wife. Left, then, to himself, amidst this turbulent and unhappy life, and having dissipated all the ready money he possessed, he was compelled to live upon the hopes of the returns expected from his ventures in the East and West. Being still in good credit, in order to support his rank he resorted to bills of exchange; nor was it long before, accounts running against him, he found himself in the same situation as many other unhappy speculators in that market. Just as his case became extremely delicate, there arrived sudden tidings both from East and West that one of his wife's brothers had dissipated the whole of Roderigo's profits in play, and that while the other was returning with a rich cargo uninsured, his ship had the misfortune to be wrecked, and he himself was lost. No sooner did this affair transpire than his creditors assembled, and supposing it must be all over with him, though their bills had not yet become due, they resolved to keep a strict watch over him in fear that he might abscond. Roderigo, on his part, thinking that there was no other remedy, and feeling how deeply he was bound by the Stygian law, determined at all hazards to make his escape. So taking horse one morning early, as he luckily lived near the Prato gate, in that direction he went off. His departure was soon known; the creditors were all in a bustle; the magistrates were applied to, and the officers of justice, along with a great part of the populace, were despatched in pursuit. Roderigo had hardly proceeded a mile before he heard this hue and cry, and the pursuers were soon so close at his heels that the only resource he had left was to abandon the highroad and take to the open country, with the hope of conceal-

ing himself in the fields. But finding himself unable to make way over the hedges and ditches, he left his horse and took to his heels, traversing fields of vines and canes, until he reached Peretola, where he entered the house of Matteo del Bricca, a laborer of Giovanna del Bene. Finding him at home, for he was busily providing fodder for his cattle, our hero earnestly entreated him to save him from the hands of his adversaries close behind, who would infallibly starve him to death in a dungeon, engaging that if Matteo would give him refuge, he would make him one of the richest men alive, and afford him such proofs of it before he took his leave as would convince him of the truth of what he said; and if he failed to do this, he was quite content that Matteo himself should deliver him into the hands of his enemies.

Now Matteo, although a rustic, was a man of courage, and concluding that he could not lose anything by the speculation, he gave him his hand and agreed to save him. He then thrust our hero under a heap of rubbish, completely enveloping him in weeds; so that when his pursuers arrived they found themselves quite at a loss, nor could they extract from Matteo the least information as to his appearance. In this dilemma there was nothing left for them but to proceed in the pursuit, which they continued for two days, and then returned, jaded and disappointed, to Florence. In the meanwhile, Matteo drew our hero from his hiding-place, and begged him to fulfill his engagement. To this his friend Roderigo replied: "I confess, brother, that I am under great obligations to you, and I mean to return them. To leave no doubt upon your mind, I will inform you who I am;" and he proceeded to acquaint him with all the particulars of the affair; how he had come into the world, and married, and run away. He next described to his preserver the way in which he might become rich, which was briefly as follows. As soon as Matteo should hear of some lady in the neighborhood being said to be possessed, he was to conclude that it was Roderigo himself who had taken possession of her; and he gave him his word, at the same time, that he would never leave her until Matteo should come and conjure him to depart. In this way he might obtain what sum he pleased from the lady's friends for the price of exorcising her; and having mutually agreed upon this plan, Roderigo disappeared.

Not many days elapsed before it was reported in Florence that

the daughter of Messer Ambrogio Amedei, a lady married to Buonajuto Tebalducci, was possessed by the devil. Her relations did not fail to apply every means usual on such occasions to expel him, such as making her wear upon her head St. Zanobi's cap, and the cloak of St. John of Gualberto; but these had only the effect of making Roderigo laugh. And to convince them that it was really a spirit that possessed her, and that it was no flight of the imagination, he made the young lady talk Latin, hold a philosophical dispute, and reveal the frailties of many of her acquaintance. He particularly accused a certain friar of having introduced a lady into his monastery in male attire, to the no small scandal of all who heard it, and the astonishment of the brotherhood. Messer Ambrogio found it impossible to silence him, and began to despair of his daughter's cure. But the news reaching Matteo, he lost no time in waiting upon Ambrogio, assuring him of his daughter's recovery on condition of his paying him five hundred florins, with which to purchase a farm at Peretola. To this Messer Ambrogio consented; and Matteo immediately ordered a number of masses to be said, after which he proceeded with some unmeaning ceremonies calculated to give solemnity to his task. Then approaching the young lady, he whispered in her ear: "Roderigo, it is Matteo that is come. So do as we agreed upon, and get out." Roderigo replied: "It is all well; but you have not asked enough to make you a rich man. So when I depart I will take possession of the daughter of Charles, king of Naples, and I will not leave her till you come. You may then demand whatever you please for your reward; and mind that you never trouble me again." And when he had said this, he went out of the lady, to the no small delight and amazement of the whole city of Florence.

It was not long again before the accident that had happened to the daughter of the king of Naples began to be buzzed about the country, and all the monkish remedies having been found to fail, the king, hearing of Matteo, sent for him from Florence. On arriving at Naples, Matteo, after a few ceremonies, performed the cure. Before leaving the princess, however, Roderigo said: "You see, Matteo, I have kept my promise, and made a rich man of you, and I owe you nothing now. So, henceforward you will take care to keep out of my way, lest as I have hitherto done you some good, just the contrary should happen to you in

future." Upon this Matteo thought it best to return to Florence, after receiving fifty thousand ducats from his majesty, in order to enjoy his riches in peace, and never once imagined that Roderigo would come in his way again. But in this he was deceived; for he soon heard that a daughter of Louis, king of France, was possessed by an evil spirit, which disturbed our friend Matteo not a little, thinking of his majesty's great authority and of what Roderigo had said. Hearing of Matteo's great skill, and finding no other remedy, the king despatched a messenger for him, whom Matteo contrived to send back with a variety of excuses. But this did not long avail him; the king applied to the Florentine council, and our hero was compelled to attend. Arriving with no very pleasant sensations at Paris, he was introduced into the royal presence, when he assured his majesty that though it was true he had acquired some fame in the course of his demoniac practice, he could by no means always boast of success, and that some devils were of such a desperate character as not to pay the least attention to threats, enchantments, or even the exorcisms of religion itself. He would, nevertheless, do his majesty's pleasure, entreating at the same time to be held excused if it should happen to prove an obstinate case. To this the king made answer, that be the case what it might, he would certainly hang him if he did not succeed. It is impossible to describe poor Matteo's terror and perplexity on hearing these words; but at length mustering courage, he ordered the possessed princess to be brought into his presence. Approaching as usual close to her ear, he conjured Roderigo in the most humble terms, by all he had ever done for him, not to abandon him in such a dilemma, but to show some sense of gratitude for past services and to leave the princess. "Ah, thou traitorous villain!" cried Roderigo, "hast thou, indeed, ventured to meddle in this business? Dost thou boast thyself a rich man at my expense? I will now convince the world and thee of the extent of my power, both to give and to take away. I shall have the pleasure of seeing thee hanged before thou leavest this place." Poor Matteo finding there was no remedy, said nothing more, but, like a wise man, set his head to work in order to discover some other means of expelling the spirit; for which purpose he said to the king, "Sire, it is as I feared: there are certain spirits of so malignant a character that there is no keeping any terms with them, and

this is one of them. However, I will make a last attempt, and I trust that it will succeed according to our wishes. If not, I am in your majesty's power, and I hope you will take compassion on my innocence. In the first place, I have to entreat that your majesty will order a large stage to be erected in the center of the great square, such as will admit the nobility and clergy of the whole city. The stage ought to be adorned with all kinds of silks and with cloth of gold, and with an altar raised in the middle. Tomorrow morning I would have your majesty, with your full train of lords and ecclesiastics in attendance, seated in order and in magnificent array, as spectators of the scene at the said place. There, after having celebrated solemn mass, the possessed princess must appear; but I have in particular to entreat that on one side of the square may be stationed a band of men with drums, trumpets, horns, tambours, bagpipes, cymbals, and kettledrums, and all other kinds of instruments that make the most infernal noise. Now, when I take my hat off, let the whole band strike up, and approach with the most horrid uproar towards the stage. This, along with a few other secret remedies which I shall apply, will surely compel the spirit to depart."

These preparations were accordingly made by the royal command; and when the day, being Sunday morning, arrived, the stage was seen crowded with people of rank and the square with the people. Mass was celebrated, and the possessed princess conducted between two bishops, with a train of nobles, to the spot. Now, when Roderigo beheld so vast a concourse of people, together with all this awful preparation, he was almost struck dumb with astonishment, and said to himself, "I wonder what that cowardly wretch is thinking of doing now? Does he imagine I have never seen finer things than these in the regions above—ay! and more horrid things below? However, I will soon make him repent it, at all events." Matteo then approaching him, besought him to come out; but Roderigo replied, "Oh, you think you have done a fine thing now! What do you mean to do with all this trumpery? Can you escape my power, think you, in this way, or elude the vengeance of the king? Thou poltroon villain, I will have thee hanged for this!" And as Matteo continued the more to entreat him, his adversary still vilified him in the same strain. So Matteo, believing there was no time to be lost, made

the sign with his hat, when all the musicians who had been stationed there for the purpose suddenly struck up a hideous din, and ringing a thousand peals, approached the spot. Roderigo pricked up his ears at the sound, quite at a loss what to think, and rather in a perturbed tone of voice he asked Matteo what it meant. To this the latter returned, apparently much alarmed: "Alas! dear Roderigo, it is your wife; she is coming for you!" It is impossible to give an idea of the anguish of Roderigo's mind and the strange alteration which his feelings underwent at that name. The moment the name of "wife" was pronounced, he had no longer presence of mind to consider whether it were probable, or even possible, that it could be she. Without replying a single word, he leaped out and fled in the utmost terror, leaving the lady to herself, and preferring rather to return to his infernal abode and render an account of his adventures than run the risk of any further sufferings and vexations under the matrimonial yoke. And thus Belphegor again made his appearance in the infernal domains, bearing ample testimony to the evils introduced into a household by a wife; while Matteo, on his part, who knew more of the matter than the devil, returned triumphantly home, not a little proud of the victory he had achieved.

## MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

106-43 B. C.

A Roman orator, statesman, letter-writer and philosopher. He was the son of an aristocratic Roman family, and as such easily obtained entrance into the political world, where he soon became a power. The first of the following letters was written to his wife while he was a temporary political exile. He was assassinated in the upheaval following the murder of Julius Caesar. As a stylist Cicero ranks first among the Romans. His influence on the early Christian writers was profound, and reached its culmination in the Renaissance.

### TO TERENCE (AT ROME)

THESSALONICA, 5 OCTOBER, 58 B. C.

**G**REETINGS to Terentia, and Tulliola, and Cicero. Don't suppose that I write longer letters to anyone else, unless some one has written at unusual length to me, whom I think myself bound to answer. For I have nothing to write about and there is nothing at such a time as this that I find it more difficult to do. Moreover, to you and my dear Tulliola I cannot write without many tears. For I see you reduced to the greatest misery—the very people whom I desired to be ever enjoying the most complete happiness, a happiness which it was my bounden duty to secure, and which I should have secured if I had not been such a coward. Our dear Piso I love exceedingly for his noble conduct. I have to the best of my ability encouraged him by letter to proceed, and thanked him, as I was bound to do. I gather that you entertain hopes in the new tribunes. We shall have reason to depend on that, if we may depend on Pompey's goodwill, but yet I am nervous about Crassus. I gather that you have behaved in every respect with the greatest courage and most loyal affection, nor am I surprised at it; but I grieve that the position should be such that my miseries are relieved by such heavy ones on your part. For a kind friend of ours, Publius Valerius, has told me in a letter which I could not read without violent weeping, how you had been dragged from the temple of Vesta to the Vaerian bank. To think of it, my dear, my love! You from whom everybody used to look for help! That you, my Terentia, should now be thus harassed, thus prostrate in tears and humiliating distress! And that this should be brought about by my fault, who have preserved the rest of the citizens only to perish myself! As to what

you say about our town house, or other its site, I shall not consider myself fully restored, until it has also been restored for me. However, these things are not yet within our grasp. I am only sorry that you, impoverished and plundered as you are, should be called upon to bear any part of the present expenses. Of course, if the business is successfully accomplished we shall get everything back; but if the same evil fortune keeps up down, will you be so foolish as to throw away even the poor remains of your fortune? I beseech you, my life, as far as expense goes, allow others to bear it, who are well able if they are only willing to do so; and do not, as you love me, try your delicate constitution. For I have you day and night before my eyes: I see you eagerly undertaking labors of every kind: I fear you cannot endure them. Yet I see that everything depends on you! Wherefore, to enable us to attain what you hope and are striving for, attend carefully to your health. I don't know to whom to write except to those who write to me, or to those about whom you say something in your letters. I will not go farther off, since that is your wish, but pray send me a letter as often as possible, especially if there is anything on which we may safely build our hope. Good-bye, my loves, good-bye!

TO M. MARIUS (AT CUMÆ)

ROME (OCTOBER) 55 B. C.

**I**F SOME bodily pain or weakness of health has prevented your coming to the games, I put it down to fortune rather than your own wisdom; but if you have made up your mind that these things which the rest of the world admires are only worthy of contempt, and, though your health would have allowed of it, you yet were unwilling to come, then I rejoice at both facts—that you were free from bodily pain, and that you had the sound sense to disdain what others causelessly admire. Only I hope that some fruit of your leisure may be forthcoming, a leisure, indeed, which you had a splendid opportunity of enjoying to the full, seeing that you were left almost alone in your lovely country. For I doubt not that in that study of yours, from which you have opened a window into the Stabian waters of the bay, and obtained a view of Misenum, you have spent the morning hours of those days in light reading, while those who left you there were watching the ordinary farces half asleep. The remaining parts of the day, too, you spent in the pleasures which you



had yourself arranged to suit your own taste, while we had to endure whatever had met with the approval of Spurius Mæcius. On the whole, if you care to know, the games were most splendid, but not to your taste. I judge from my own. For, to begin with, as a special honor to the occasion, those actors had come back to the stage who, I thought, had left it for their own. Indeed, your favorite, my friend Æsop, was in such a state that no one could say a word against his retiring from the profession. On beginning to recite the oath his voice failed him at the words "If I knowingly deceive." Why should I go on with the story? You know all about the rest of the games, which hadn't even that amount of charm which games on a moderate scale generally have: for the spectacle was so elaborate as to leave no room for cheerful enjoyment, and I think you need feel no regret at having missed it. For what is the pleasure of a train of six hundred mules in the "Clytemnestra," or three thousand bowls in the "Trojan Horse," or gay-colored armor of infantry and cavalry in some battle? These things roused the admiration of the vulgar; to you they would have brought no delight. But if during those days you listened to your reader Protogenes, so long at least as he read anything rather than my speeches, surely you had far greater pleasure than any one of us. For I don't suppose you wanted to see Greek or Oscan plays, especially as you can see Oscan farces in your senate-house over there, while you are so far from liking Greeks, that you generally won't even go along the Greek road to your villa. Why, again, should I suppose you to care about missing the athletes, since you disdained the gladiators? in which even Pompey himself confesses that he lost his trouble and his pains. There remain the two wild-beast hunts, lasting five days, magnificent—nobody denies it—and yet, what pleasure can it be to a man of refinement, when either a weak man is torn by an extremely powerful animal, or a splendid animal is transfixed by a hunting spear? Things which, after all, if worth seeing, you have often seen before; nor did I, who was present at the games, see anything the least new. The last day was that of the elephants, on which there was a great deal of astonishment on the part of the vulgar crowd, but no pleasure whatever. Nay, there was even a certain feeling of compassion aroused by it, and a kind of belief created that that animal has something in common with mankind. However, for my part,

during this day, while the theatrical exhibitions were on, lest by chance you should think me too blessed, I almost split my lungs in defending your friend Caninius Gallus. But if the people were as indulgent to me as they were to Æsop, I would, by heaven, have been glad to abandon my profession and live with you and others like us. The fact is I was tired of it before, even when both age and ambition stirred me on, and when I could also decline any defence that I didn't like; but now, with things in the state that they are, there is no life worth having. For, on the one hand, I expect no profit of my labor; and, on the other, I am sometimes forced to defend men who have been no friends to me, at the request of those to whom I am under obligations. Accordingly, I am on the look-out for every excuse for at last managing my life according to my own taste, and I loudly applaud and vehemently approve both you and your retired plan of life; and as to your infrequent appearances among us, I am the more resigned to that because, were you in Rome, I should be prevented from enjoying the charm of your society, and so would you of mine, if I have any, by the overpowering nature of my engagements; from which, if I get any relief—for entire release I don't expect—I will give even you, who have been studying nothing else for many years, some hints as to what it is to live a life of cultivated enjoyment. Only be careful to nurse your weak health and to continue your present care of it, so that you may be able to visit my country houses and make excursions with me in my litter. I have written you a longer letter than usual, from superabundance, not of leisure, but of affection, because, if you remember, you asked me in one of your letters to write you something to prevent you feeling sorry at having missed the games. And if I have succeeded in that, I am glad: if not, I yet console myself with this reflection, that in future you will both come to the games and come to see me, and will not leave your hope of enjoyment dependent on my letters.

TO CÆSAR (IN GAUL)

ROME (FEBRUARY) 54 B. C.

**C**ICERO greets Cæsar, *imperator*. Observe how far I have convinced myself that you are my second self, not only in matters which concern me personally, but even in those which concern my friends. It had been my intention to take Gaius Trebatius with me for whatever destination I should be leaving

town, in order to bring him home again honored as much as my zeal and favor could make him. But when Pompey remained at home longer than I expected, and a certain hesitation on my part (with which you are not unacquainted ) appeared to hinder, or at any rate to retard, my departure, I presumed upon what I will now explain to you. I begin to wish that Trebatius should look to you for what he had hoped from me, and, in fact, I have been no more sparing of my promises of goodwill on your part than I had been wont to be of my own. Moreover, an extraordinary coincidence has occurred which seems to support my opinion and to guarantee your kindness. For just as I was speaking to our friend Balbus about this very Trebatius at my house, with more than usual earnestness, a letter from you was handed to me, at the end of which you say: "Miscinius Rufus, whom you recommend to me, I will make king of Gaul, or, if you choose, put him under the care of Lepta. Send me some one else to promote." I and Balbus both lifted our hands in surprise: it came so exactly in the nick of time, that it appeared to be less the result of mere chance than something providential. I therefore send you Trebatius, and on two grounds, first that it was my spontaneous idea to send him, and secondly because you have invited me to do so. I would beg you, dear Cæsar, to receive him with such a display of kindness as to concentrate on his single person all that you can be possibly induced to bestow for my sake upon my friends. As for him I guarantee—not in the sense of that hackneyed expression of mine, at which, when I used it in writing to you about Milo, you very properly jested, but in good Roman language such as sober men use—that no honester, better, or more modest man exists. Added to this, he is at the top of his profession as a jurisconsult, possesses an unequaled memory, and the most profound learning. For such a man I ask neither a tribuneship, prefecture, nor any definite office, I ask only your goodwill and liberality: and yet I do not wish to prevent your complimenting him, if it so please you, with even these marks of distinction. In fact, I transfer him entirely from my hand, so to speak, to yours, which is as sure a pledge of good faith as of victory. Excuse my being somewhat importunate, though with a man like you there can hardly be any pretext for it—however, I feel that it will be allowed to pass. Be careful of your health and continue to love me as ever.

## PLINY THE YOUNGER

63-113 A. D.

A nephew of the celebrated naturalist known as Pliny the Elder. This writer's full name was Caius Plinius Caecilius Secundis. He was carefully educated, as befitted an aristocratic Roman, and began to practice law at the age of eighteen. Under the emperor Trajan, who was his devoted friend, he held various important offices. In 111 he was made governor of Bithynia, whence he wrote to Trajan the curious account of the Christians on which his fame rests. Besides this account, there remain of his writings only a eulogy of Trajan and a number of letters, of which the following is one, although it ranks as a short story as well.

### THE HAUNTED HOUSE

THERE was at Athens a mansion, spacious and commodious, but of evil repute and dangerous to health. In the dead of night there was a noise as of iron, and, if you listened more closely, a clanking of chains was heard, first of all from a distance, and afterwards hard by. Presently a specter used to appear, an ancient man sinking with emaciation and squalor, with a long beard and bristly hair, wearing shackles on his legs and fetters on his hands, and shaking them. Hence the inmates, by reason of their fears, passed miserable and horrible nights in sleeplessness. This want of sleep was followed by disease, and their terrors increasing, by death. For in the daytime as well, though the apparition had departed, yet a reminiscence of it flitted before their eyes, and their dread outlived its cause. The mansion was accordingly deserted and, condemned to solitude, was entirely abandoned to the dreadful ghost. However, it was advertised on the chance of some one, ignorant of the fearful curse attached to it, being willing to buy or to rent it. Athenodorus the philosopher came to Athens and read the advertisement. When he had been informed of the terms, which were so low as to appear suspicious, he made inquiries, and learned the whole of the particulars. Yet none the less on that account, nay, all the more readily, did he rent the house. As evening began to draw on, he ordered a sofa to be set for himself in the front part of the house, and called for his notebooks, writing implements, and a light. All his servants he dismissed to the interior apartments,

and for himself, applied his soul, eyes, and hand to composition, that his mind might not, from want of occupation, picture to itself the phantoms of which he had heard, or any empty terrors. At the commencement there was the universal silence of night. Soon the shaking of irons and the clanking of chains was heard, yet he never raised his eyes nor slackened his pen, but hardened his soul and deadened his ears by its help. The noise grew and approached; now it seemed to be heard at the door, and next inside the door. He looked round, beheld and recognized the figure he had been told of. It was standing and signaling to him with its finger, as though inviting him. He, in reply, made a sign with his hand that it should wait a moment, and applied himself afresh to his tablets and pen. Upon this the figure kept rattling its chains over his head as he wrote. On looking round again, he saw it making the same signal as before, and without delay took up a light and followed it. It moved with a slow step, as though oppressed by its chains, and, after turning into the courtyard of the house, vanished suddenly and left his company. On being thus left to himself, he marked the spot with some grass and leaves which he plucked. Next day he applied to the magistrates, and urged them to have the spot in question dug up. There were found there some bones attached to and intermingled with fetters; the body to which they had belonged, rotted away by time and the soil, had abandoned them thus naked and corroded to the chains. They were collected and interred at the public expense, and the house was ever afterwards free from the spirit, which had obtained due sepulture.

The above story I believe on the strength of those who affirm it. What follows I am myself in a position to affirm to others. I have a freedman, who is not without some knowledge of letters. A younger brother of his was sleeping with him in the same bed. The latter dreamed he saw some one sitting on the couch, who approached a pair of scissors to his head, and even cut the hair from the crown of it. When day dawned he was found to be cropped round the crown, and his locks were discovered lying about. A very short time afterwards a fresh occurrence of the same kind confirmed the truth of the former one. A lad of mine was sleeping, in company with several others, in the pages' apartment. There came through the windows (so he tells the story) two figures in white tunics, who cut his hair as he lay, and de-

parted the way they came. In his case, too, daylight exhibited him shorn, and his locks scattered around. Nothing remarkable followed, except, perhaps, this, that I was not brought under accusation, as I should have been, if Domitian (in whose reign these events happened) had lived longer. For in his desk was found an information against me which had been presented by Carus; from which circumstance it may be conjectured—inasmuch as it is the custom of accused persons to let their hair grow—that the cutting off of my slaves' hair was a sign of the danger which threatened me being averted.

I beg, then, that you will apply your great learning to this subject. The matter is one which deserves long and deep consideration on your part; nor am I, for my part, undeserving of having the fruits of your wisdom imparted to me. You may even argue on both sides (as your way is), provided you argue more forcibly on one side than the other, so as not to dismiss me in suspense and anxiety, when the very cause of my consulting you has been to have my doubts ended.

## SENECA

3 B. C.—65 A. D.

The Roman statesman and philosopher, and the foremost writer of the Silver Age of Roman literature. Most celebrated as the tutor of Nero, under whom he held powerful political offices. He died a suicide at the command of Nero. Seneca professes himself a Stoic, but scholars find in his work a Christian spirit, and it is conjectured that he knew St. Paul. Of his extant writings "Benefits," "Clemency," and the "Minor Essays" are best known.

### OF THE WISE MAN

**I** MIGHT truly say, Serenus, that there is as wide a difference between the Stoics and the other sects of philosophers as there is between men and women, since each class contributes an equal share to human society, but the one is born to command, the other to obey. The other philosophers deal with us gently and coaxingly, just as our accustomed family physicians usually do with our bodies, treating them not by the best and shortest method, but by that which we allow them to employ; whereas the Stoics adopt a manly course, and do not care about its appearing attractive to those who are entering upon it, but that it should as quickly as possible take us out of the world, and lead us to that lofty eminence which is so far beyond the scope of any missile weapon that it is above the reach of Fortune herself. "But the way by which we are asked to climb is steep and uneven." What then? Can heights be reached by a level path? Yet they are not so sheer and precipitous as some think. It is only the first part that has rocks and cliffs and no apparent outlet, just as many hills seen from a long way off appear abruptly steep and joined together, because the distance deceives our sight, and then, as we draw nearer, those very hills, which our mistaken eyes had made into one gradually unfold themselves, those parts which seemed precipitous from afar assume a gently sloping outline. When just now mention was made of Marcus Cato, you whose mind revolts at injustice were indignant at Cato's own age having so little understood him, at its having allotted a place below Vatinius to one who towered above both Caesar and Pompey; it seemed shameful to you, that

when he spoke against some law in the Forum his toga was torn from him, and that he was hustled through the hands of a mutinous mob from the Rostra as far as the arch of Fabius; enduring all the bad language, spitting, and other insults of the frantic rabble.

I then answered, that you had good cause to be anxious on behalf of the commonwealth, which Publius Clodius on the one side, Vatinius and all the greatest scoundrels on the other, were putting up for sale, and carried away by their blind covetousness, did not understand that when they sold it they themselves were sold with it; I bade you have no fears on behalf of Cato himself, because the wise man can neither receive injury nor insults, and it is more certain that the immortal gods have given Cato as a pattern of a wise man to us, than that they gave Ulysses or Hercules to the earlier ages; for these our Stoics have declared were wise men, unconquered by labors, despisers of pleasure, and superior to all terrors. Cato did not slay wild beasts, whose pursuit belongs to huntsmen and countrymen, nor did he exterminate fabulous creatures with fire and sword, or live in times when it was possible to believe that the heavens could be supported on the shoulders of one man. In an age which had thrown off its belief in antiquated superstitions, and had carried material knowledge to its highest point, he had to struggle against that many-headed monster, ambition, against that boundless lust for power which the whole world divided among three men could not satisfy. He alone withstood the vices of a worn-out state sinking into ruin through its own bulk; he upheld the falling commonwealth as far as it could be upheld by one man's hand, until at last his support was withdrawn, and he shared the crash which he had so long averted, and perished together with that from which it was impious to separate him—for Cato did not outlive freedom, nor did freedom outlive Cato. Think you that the people could do any wrong to such a man when they tore away his prætorship or his toga? when they bespattered his sacred head with the rinsings of their mouths? The wise man is safe, and no injury or insult can touch him.

Consider now, whether any thief, or false accuser, or headstrong neighbor, or rich man enjoying the power conferred by a childless old age, could do any injury to this man, from whom neither war nor an enemy whose profession was the noble art



of battering city walls could take away anything. Amid the flash of swords on all sides, and the riot of the plundering soldiery, amid the flames and blood and ruin of the fallen city, amid the crash of temples falling upon their gods, one man was at peace. You need not therefore account that a reckless boast, for which I will give you a surety, if my word goes for nothing. Indeed, you would hardly believe so much constancy or such greatness of mind to belong to any man; but here a man comes forward to prove that you have no reason for doubting that one who is but of human birth can raise himself above human necessities, can tranquilly behold pains, losses, diseases, wounds, and great natural convulsions roaring around him, can bear adversity with calm and prosperity with moderation, neither yielding to the former nor trusting to the latter, that he can remain the same amid all varieties of fortune, and think nothing to be his own save himself, and himself too only as regards his better part.

You have no cause for saying, as you are wont to do, that this wise man of ours is nowhere to be found; we do not invent him as an unreal glory of the human race, or conceive a mighty shadow of an untruth, but we have displayed and will display him just as we sketch him, though he may perhaps be uncommon, and only one appears at long intervals; for what is great and transcends the common ordinary type is not often produced; but this very Marcus Cato himself, the mention of whom started this discussion, was a man who I fancy even surpassed our model. Moreover, that which hurts must be stronger than that which is hurt. Now wickedness is not stronger than virtue; therefore the wise man can not be hurt. Only the bad attempt to injure the good. Good men are at peace among themselves; bad ones are equally mischievous to the good and to one another. If a man can not be hurt by one weaker than himself, and a bad man be weaker than a good one, and the good have no injury to dread, except from one unlike themselves; then, no injury takes effect upon the wise man; for by this time I need not remind you that no one save the wise man is good.

The nobler a man is by birth, by reputation, or by inheritance, the more bravely he should bear himself, remembering that the tallest men stand in the front rank in battle. As for insults, offensive language, marks of disgrace, and such like disfigure-

ments, he ought to bear them as he would bear the shouts of the enemy, and darts or stones flung from a distance, which rattle upon his helmet without causing a wound; while he should look upon injuries as wounds, some received on his armor and others on his body, which he endures without falling or even leaving his place in the ranks. Even though you be hard pressed and violently attacked by the enemy, still it is base to give way; hold the post assigned to you by nature. You ask, what this post is? it is that of being a man. The wise man has another help, of the opposite kind to this; you are hard at work, while he has already won the victory. Do not quarrel with your own good advantage, and, until you shall have made your way to the truth, keep alive this hope in your minds, be willing to receive the news of a better life, and encourage it by your admiration and your prayers; it is to the interest of the commonwealth of mankind that there should be someone who is unconquered, someone against whom fortune has no power,

## ANTON PAVLOVICH CHEKHOV

1860-1904

Born in Taganrog, the son of a freed serf. He studied medicine at Moscow, but did not follow the profession, preferring literature. His first stories were humorous and immensely popular. But presently he turned to serious work and was soon hailed as the greatest figure in Russian literature since Turgenev. He is indeed thoroughly Russian, both in his humor and in his profound melancholy. He wrote about 150 short stories, all of them masterpieces, a number of plays, notably, "The Cherry-Garden," and one novel. Few of his stories have been translated.

### AN AWKWARD SITUATION

"CABBY, you have a heart besmeared with tar; you have never been in love, old fellow, and therefore you can't understand my psychology. This rain can not more extinguish the fire that is consuming my soul than a fire brigade could extinguish the sun. The devil, how poetically I express myself! But of course you are not a poet, are you, Cabby?"

"No, that I'm not!"

"Well now, look here . . ."

Zhirkov began at last to feel about in his pockets for his purse to pay his fare.

"We settled with you, my friend, for one rouble and a quarter. Here's your fare, a rouble and three ten kopeck pieces—here's five kopecks more. Goodbye, and don't forget me! By the by, just take this basket and put it on the steps—carefully, carefully! That basket has in it a ball-dress for the woman I love more than life!"

With a dissatisfied sigh the cabby grudgingly got off his box, and with difficulty keeping his footing in the darkness as he splashed through the slippery mud, carried the basket to the porch, where he put it down on the steps.

"My! what weather!" he grumbled surlily, and with another sigh and a sniff he unwillingly climbed on to the box again. He clicked up his old horse, which began to splash through the mud with uncertain steps.

"I think I have got all that I ought to have," said Zhirkov, groping about for the bell; "Nadia asked me to go to her dress-

maker's and fetch her dress—that's it; she asked for sweets and cheese—here they are; a bouquet—here! 'I greet thee, holy sanctuary,'" he sang. "But where the devil is the bell?"

Zhirkov was in the happy frame of mind of a man who has recently had a good supper and good drink and knows very well that he need not get up early next day. Besides, he knew that after his drive from town of an hour and a half through mud and rain a warm fire and a young woman awaited him. It is pleasant to get wet and cold when you know that you will soon be warm again.

In spite of the darkness Zhirkov at last managed to find the bell-handle and gave it two pulls. Steps were heard on the other side of the door.

"Is that you, Dmitry Grigorievich!" whispered a woman's voice.

"Yes, it's I, my charming Dunyasha," answered Zhirkov. "Open the door quickly, I am getting wet to the skin."

"Ah, good God!" whispered the maid Dunyasha in an agitated voice as she opened the door, "don't talk so loud, and don't stamp your feet. The master has arrived from Paris. He returned this evening!"

At the word "master," Zhirkov stepped back from the door and was seized for a moment by the faint-hearted, quite boyish fear that is felt even by very brave men when they are suddenly faced with the possibility of meeting the husband.

"What a sell!" he thought, listening to the cautious way Dunyasha closed the door and went along the little passage. "What now? Does it mean 'About turn'? *Merci!* I didn't expect this!"

He suddenly became amazed and jolly. His drive to her from town in the middle of the night through wind and pouring rain appeared to him an entertaining adventure, and now, when he suddenly came upon the husband, the adventure seemed to him odder still.

"A most interesting story, by God!" he said aloud. "What's to become of me now? Drive back to town? Eh?"

The rain fell in torrents and the wind howled in the trees, but neither the rain nor the trees could be seen through the darkness. As if laughing at him, mocking him maliciously, the water rushed down the gutters and rippled in the ditches. The steps on

which he stood had no roof over them, so he really began to get wet through.

"It might be on purpose, his turning up in weather like this!" he thought with a laugh; "the devil take all husbands!"

His romance with Nadezhda Osipovna had begun a month before, but he had not yet met her husband. He only knew that he was a Frenchman called Boiseau and an agent. Judging by the photograph that Zhirkov had seen, he was a very ordinary, middle-class man of about forty, with a moustache and small beard of the type worn by French soldiers. When you looked at this face, you had a strong inclination to tweak him by his moustache or beard *à la* Napoleon, and ask, "Well, what news, *Monsieur le sergent?*"

Splashing and stumbling through the wet mud, Zhirkov went a few steps from the door and called out: "Cab—cab—cabby!" There was no answer. "Not a sound, not so much as a murmur," grumbled Zhirkov, as he returned to the steps, feeling his way in the darkness. "I've sent away my cab, and even by day there are none to be found here! Here's a pretty fix! I shall have to stay here till morning, devil take it! and the basket will get wet and the dress will be spoilt. It cost two hundred roubles! A nice position to be in!"

Wondering where he could shelter and get the basket out of the rain, Zhirkov remembered that at one end of this summer resort there was a dancing ground with a band-stand.

"Shall I try to get to the band-stand?" he asked himself. "That's an idea! But shall I be able to lug the basket so far? A beastly large thing, damn it! The cheese and bouquet can go to the devil."

He took up the basket, but as he did so he remembered that before he got to the band-stand the basket would have had time to get wet through and through five times over.

"That adds to my problems!" he laughed. "What a fix. Now the water is running down my neck. Brrr!! Wet through, cold, drunk, and no cabby anywhere—now I only want her husband to come out with a stick and thrash me till I'm black and blue!—But what's to be done about it? I can't stay here till morning or the dress will be utterly ruined.—I have it—I'll ring again and hand the things to Dunyasha, and then go to the band-stand."

Zhirkov rang the bell gently. After about a minute steps were

heard in the passage, and a light shone through the key-hole.

"Who is 'erre!" asked a hoarse male voice with a foreign accent.

"By Jingo, the husband!" thought Zhirkov. "I must make up some story. I say," he called out, "is this Zluchkin's house?"

"What the devil? therre is no Slushkine 'erre. Go to the devil with your Slushkine!"

For some reason Zhirkov became confused, coughed apologetically, and retired from the steps. Slipping into a puddle he got his galoshes full of water; he spat angrily but at once began to laugh again. With every minute his adventure became more and more entertaining. He thought with particular pleasure how next day he would tell the whole humorous affair to his friends and even to Nadia, how he would mimic the voice of the husband and the sobs of the galoshes as they stuck in the mud. His friends would split their sides with laughter.

"There's only one thing annoying me—the dress will get wet," he thought. "If it were not for this dress, I should have been asleep long ago under the roof of the band-stand."

He sat down on the basket to protect it, but the water flowed from his wet mackintosh and hat in even greater streams than from the clouds.

"The deuce take it!"

Having stood half an hour in the rain, Zhirkov began to think about his own health.

"I can easily catch a bad cold this way," he thought. "A peculiar position. What about ringing again? H'm! Upon my word, I think I will. If the husband opens the door again, I can make up some sort of tale, and give him the dress. I can't stick here till morning. Well, whatever happens, I'll ring and chance it!"

Like a schoolboy showing his fist at the door and sticking out his tongue at the darkness, Zhirkov pulled the bell with energy. There was a moment of silence. Then he rang again.

"Who is 'erre!" asked the angry voice with a strong foreign accent.

"Does Madame Boiseau live here?" Zhirkov inquired respectfully.

"Hein? What the devil do you want?"

"Madame Katish, the dressmaker, sends Madame Boiseau her

dress. Pray excuse it's being so late. The fact is, Madame Boiseau asked that her dress should be sent as soon as possible—before morning—the weather is so abominable—h'm—could scarcely get here—I started from town in the evening—but—I could not . . .”

Zhirkov did not finish before the door opened, and in the flickering light of a small lamp Monsieur Boiseau stood before him on the threshold—the same Monsieur Boiseau he had seen in the photograph, with his soldier-like face and his long moustache, only in the photograph he looked a dandy—now he was clad only in a shirt.

“Very sorry to trouble you,” continued Zhirkov. “Madame Boiseau ordered her dress to be sent as soon as possible—h'm—I am Madam Katish's brother—and—and the weather is abominable.”

“All right,” said Boiseau surlily, frowning and taking the basket from Zhirkov, “thank your sister. My wife waited for her dress until one o'clock. Some sort of a *monsieur* promised to bring it.”

“Please also have the kindness to hand to Madame Boiseau this cheese and these flowers, which your wife left at Madame Katish's.”

Boiseau took the cheese and the bouquet, smelled first the one, then the other, and without closing the door, stood waiting. He looked at Zhirkov—Zhirkov looked at him. There was a moment's silence. Zhirkov remembered the friends to whom he would tell his adventures the next day, and wanted to round them off by adding some joke or other, but he could think of no joke, and the Frenchman stood and looked at him, wondering when he would go away.

“Terrible weather!” murmured Zhirkov; “pitch dark and muddy and wet. I'm soaked to the skin!”

“Yes, *monsieur*, you are very wet!”

“Add to this my cab has driven away. I don't know where to go.—You would be very kind, sir, if you would allow me to stay here in the passage until the rain stops?”

“Ah! *bien, monsieur*. Take off your galoshes and come this way.—It is nothing—all right!”

The Frenchman closed the door, and led Zhirkov into the very familiar little sitting-room. It looked just as usual, except that

a bottle of claret stood on the table, and in the middle of the room there was a row of chairs on which a very thin, narrow mattress had been placed.

"Very cold," said Boiseau, placing the lamp on the table. "I only arrived from Paris yesterday. Everywhere it is fine—warm, but here, in Russia, cold, and these mosquit—mosquitoes—*les cousins*—sting damnably."

Boiseau poured out half a glass of wine, made a serious face, and drank it off.

"Have not slept all night," he said, sitting down on the mattress, "what with *les cousins* and some beast ringing the whole time and asking for Slushkine."

The Frenchman was silent, bowed his head and seemed to be waiting for the rain to stop. Zhirkov thought that it would only be polite to speak to him.

"You were in Paris at a very interesting time," he began; "Boulanger resigned while you were there."

Then Zhirkov talked about Grévy, Déroulède, Zola, and was soon convinced that this was the first time the Frenchman had heard these names. In Paris he knew only a few business firms and his aunt, Mme. Blesser, nobody else. The conversation about politics and literature ended in making Boiseau look very cross. He then helped himself to another glass of wine and stretched himself out on his very thin mattress.

"Well, well, the rights of this husband are evidently not very extensive!" thought Zhirkov. "That's a fiend of a mattress!"

The Frenchman closed his eyes and remained quiet for about a quarter of an hour; then he suddenly jumped up, stared at his guest with his vacant eyes as if he could not understand anything, looked irritated, and had another glass of wine.

"Damned mosquitoes," he grumbled, and rubbing one hairy leg against the other went into the next room.

Zhirkov heard him wake some one and say: "*Il y a là un monsieur roux qui t'a apporté une robe.*"

He soon returned and once more had recourse to the bottle.

"My wife will come out soon," he said, yawning. "I understand—you require money?"

"It doesn't get any better the longer it lasts," thought Zhirkov. "Very curious—Nadezhda Osipovna will appear now. Of course I must look as if I don't know her."



The rustle of skirts was heard, the door opened a little, and Zhirkov saw a familiar curly head with flushed cheeks and sleepy eyes.

"Who is it has come from Mme. Katish!" asked Nedezhda Osipovna, but as soon as she saw Zhirkov she gave a little scream, and laughing, came into the room.

"Oh, it's you, is it? What does all this farce mean—and why are you so dirty?"

Zhirkov got very red; his eyes grew serious, and not knowing what to do he glanced helplessly at Boiseau.

"Ah! I understand," said the lady of the house. "You were afraid of Jacques. I forgot to warn Dunyasha . . . You are not acquainted? This is my husband and this is Stepan Andreevich. You've brought my dress? Thanks awfully, old boy! Come along, I *am* so sleepy. And Jacques, you go to sleep too," she said turning to her husband; "you must be tired after your long journey."

Jacques looked at Zhirkov with surprise, shrugged his shoulders and with an angry face went to the bottle. Zhirkov also shrugged his shoulders and followed Nadezhda Osipovna.

He looked at the lowering sky and the dirty road and thought.

"Dirt! what situations the evil spirit can drive a cultivated man into!"

Then he began to think of what was moral and what was immoral, of what was clean and of what was unclean. As it often happens to people who have got into unpleasant situations, he remembered with sadness his study with all the papers on his desk, and the work that had to be done, and he wished he were at home.

He went quickly through the sitting-room, past Jacques, who was fast asleep.

He was silent all the way to town, trying not to think of Jacques, whom for some reason he could not get out of his mind. This time he did not talk to his driver. His conscience felt as uncomfortable as his stomach.

## FEDOR MIKHAYLOVICH DOSTOEVSKI

1821-1881

Dostoevski was brought up in a religious atmosphere in Moscow, and in his youth read widely in foreign languages. In 1846 he published his first novel, "Poor Folk." The great event of his life was his banishment to the Siberian mines on a charge of socialistic conspiracy in 1849—an event which resulted in his great "Memoirs of a Dead House." In 1859 he returned to Petrograd to resume his literary career. He died in Petrograd from the effects of his sufferings in Siberia. As a novelist Dostoevski ranks among the world's greatest. "If one were asked," says a modern critic, "to sum up briefly what was Dostoevski's message to his generation and to the world, one would do so in two words: love and pity."

### A NASTY STORY

THIS nasty story dates from just that time when our dear country was beginning to pass through the period of regeneration, a period which opened with such irresistible force and with such touchingly naive transports of delight, when all her valorous sons aspired to new hopes and a new destiny. At that time, one bright, frosty, winter's evening at a little past eleven o'clock, three very honorable men were sitting in a comfortable, even luxurious room in a fine two-storied house on the Petersburg Side. They were occupied in serious and absorbing talk on a most interesting subject. All three men were of the rank of General. They were seated round a small table, each in a beautiful, soft arm-chair, and during their conversation quietly sipped champagne from time to time. The bottle stood on the table in a silver wine-cooler. The fact of the matter is that the master of the house, Privy Councillor Stepan Nikiforovich Nikiforov, an old bachelor of sixty-five, was holding a house-warming in his newly-purchased house, and at the same time celebrating his birthday, which happened to fall on that day, but of which he had never before taken any notice. The celebration was nothing very out of the way, for, as we have already seen, there were only two guests, both of them former colleagues and subordinates of Mr. Nikiforov's, by name, one of them Actual State Councillor Semen Ivanovich Shipulenko, and the other, also Actual State Councillor, Ivan Il'ich Pralinski. They

had come about nine o'clock to tea and had afterwards sat down to a glass of wine, and they knew that at exactly half-past eleven they would have to go home. Their host had all his life preferred regular habits. And here we must say two words about him. He had begun his career as a small government official without any private means, and had quietly rubbed along for five and forty years, knowing very well the height to which he would attain in the service. He could not bear to scramble for the stars above, although he had already two of them, and particularly disliked to give his personal opinion on any subject. He was honest, too, that is to say, he had never had occasion to do anything very dishonest; he was a bachelor because he was an egotist; he was not at all stupid, but could not bear to show his cleverness; he particularly disliked slovenliness and enthusiasm, which he considered moral slovenliness, and towards the end of his life he had gradually sunk into a sort of sweet, lazy comfort and systematic solitude. Although he sometimes visited the better sort of people, from his youth upwards he had not been able to bear receiving guests at home, and during later years, if he was not playing the *Grande-patience*, he contented himself with the company of his clock, and would sit for whole evenings serenely dreaming in an arm-chair, and listening to it ticking on the mantelpiece under its glass case. He was very respectable to look at, and being clean-shaven looked younger than he was. Well-preserved, he promised to live long and conducted himself in the manner of the strictest gentleman. He occupied a pretty comfortable post; he was on some sort of board and had some sort of papers to sign. In a word, he was considered a most excellent man. He had only one passion, or it would be better to say, he had only one burning desire: that was to possess a house, a house built in the style of a gentleman's residence, not a house to be let off in flats or shops. And this wish had at last been realized. He had looked about him and had bought a house on the Petersburg Side; true, it was rather far away, but it had a garden and was beautifully built. The new householder considered it an advantage to be far away, as he did not like company at home, and for the purpose of going to see anyone, or to the office, he had a fine, two-seated, chocolate-colored carriage, a pair of small, strong, but handsome, horses, and a coachman, Mikhey. All this

he had himself acquired by forty years of minute economy, so that it all delighted his heart. This is why, having purchased a house and moved into it, Stepan Nikiforovich felt in his peaceful soul such satisfaction that he actually invited guests on his birthday, a day he had always carefully kept secret from his most intimate friends.

One of his guests he had special reasons for inviting. He himself only occupied the upper story of his house, and for the lower story, which was constructed exactly the same, he required a tenant. Stepan Nikiforovich was reckoning on Semen Ivanovich Shipulenko, and during the evening had twice turned the conversation on this subject. But Semen Ivanovich had kept silent in the matter. He was a man with black hair and whiskers, and a complexion that looked as if he suffered from chronic jaundice; he too had with difficulty and long years of toil made his way. He was a married man, a morose stay-at-home who kept his family in fear; he was self-confident in his work, and he too very well knew what rank he could attain to, and better still, what rank he could never attain to; he held a warm post and sat there very tight. He looked on the new order of things not without a certain bitterness, but did not trouble much about them, and he listened to Ivan Il'vich Pralinski's big talk on the new themes with a malicious smile. As a matter of fact they had all drunk rather too much, and even Stepan Nikiforovich condescended to enter into an argument with Mr. Pralinski on the subject of the new reforms. We must now say a few words about Mr. Pralinski, who is the chief hero of the following tale.

It was only four months since State Councillor Ivan Il'vich Pralinski had begun to be called "Your Excellency," so he was only a young general. Even in years he was young, about forty-three—certainly not more—and looked, and liked looking, even younger. He was a tall, handsome man who loved to be well-dressed and prided himself on the good quality of his clothes; he also wore with dignity the moderately high decoration he had round his neck. From his childhood he had understood how to pick up some of the manners of the best society, and as he was a bachelor he dreamed of a rich bride, even of one of high birth. There were many other things he dreamed of, although he was far from stupid. He was often a great talker and loved to assume

parliamentary poses. He was descended from a good family, being the lily-fingered son of a General, and in his early childhood had worn velvet and fine linen. He had been educated in an aristocratic school, and though he had left it bringing away with him but little learning, he had succeeded well in the civil service and had pushed up to the rank of General. His superiors considered him a very able man and went so far as to place great hopes in him. Stepan Nikiforovich, under whom he had begun and continued his official career almost up to the time he rose to the rank of General, had never considered him very capable, and had never reposed any hopes in him. What he liked about him was that he was of good family and had a private fortune: that is to say, he owned a large lucrative house, let off in flats, with its own manager; that he was related to many far from unimportant personages; and, above all, that he had a very dignified bearing. In his heart Stepan Nikiforovich blamed him for too much imagination and for a certain levity. Ivan Il'vich himself sometimes felt that he was too egotistical and sensitive. Strange to say, he had occasional fits of sickly conscientiousness, and sometimes even a feeling of slight repentance for something. He acknowledged in his soul with bitterness and secret heart-ache that he did not really soar as high as he imagined. At those moments he fell into a state of dejection (more especially when his hæmorrhoids were troublesome, called his life "*une existence manquée*," ceased (privately of course) to believe even in himself or his parliamentary capacities, and called himself an empty talker and a phrase-maker. Although all this was of course much to his credit, it did not prevent his raising his head again half an hour later and assuring himself with all the more courage and obstinacy that he would still have time to develop, and would not only attain high rank but would become a great statesman, long to be remembered in Russia. He had even distant glimmers of a monument raised in his honor. From all this it can be seen that Ivan Il'ich aimed high, though he hid away even from himself his secret, uncertain thoughts and hopes. In short, he was a kind man, and a poet at heart. In the course of the last few years his moments of ill-health and disenchantment had visited him more often. He had become irritable and suspicious and was ready to consider every contradiction as an offense. The regen-

eration of Russia suddenly gave him great hopes. The rank of General only confirmed them. He started up; he raised his head; he suddenly began to speak eloquently and at length, to speak on the very newest subjects and ideas, which he had rapidly and unaccountably adopted with passion. He sought for occasions to speak. He went about town searching for them and in many places gained the reputation of being a hopeless Liberal, which flattered him very much. This evening, having drunk about four glasses of wine, he became more talkative than usual. He wanted to convert Stepan Nikiforovich, whom he had not seen for a long time, and whom he had till then always honored and even obeyed. For some reason he now considered him a retrograde and fell upon him with unusual heat. Stepan Nikiforovich hardly contradicted him, although the subject interested him too, but sat and listened slyly. Ivan Il'ich became excited, and in the heat of an imaginary argument applied his lips more often than he should to his glass. Then Stepan Nikiforovich took up the bottle and at once refilled the glass, which for some unknown reason began to offend Ivan Il'ich; especially as Semen Ivanovich Shipulenko, whom he particularly despised and even feared, on account of his cynical contemptuousness, sat by in malicious silence and smiled more often than was necessary. "They think I'm a mere boy!" shot through Ivan Il'ich's head.

"No sir, it is time, it was time long ago," he continued. "We are already too late, sir; to my mind to be humane is the important thing; to be humane towards your subordinates, remembering that they too are men. Humaneness will save everything, will carry everything through . . ."

"He, he, he!" came from the side where Semen Ivanovich was sitting.

"But why, may I ask, are you giving us such a roasting?" remarked Stepan Nikiforovich at last with an amiable smile. "I must confess, Ivan Il'ich, that so far I have not been able to understand what you have been good enough to explain. You have been exalting humaneness. Does that mean love for humanity?"

"Yes, perhaps it is love for the whole of humanity. I——"

"Permit me, sir! As far as I can judge, the matter does not stop there. Love for humanity must always exist; the reforms

are not limited to that. All sorts of questions have been raised, relating to the peasants, law reforms, agriculture, spirit licenses, morals, and so on; the questions are without end, and taken all together, all at once, they may cause very great—let us say—oscillations. That is what we are afraid of, not only humaneness . . .”

“Yes, sir, the matter is deeper,” remarked Semen Ivanovich.

“I quite understand, sir, and allow me to observe, Semen Ivanovich, that I do not for a moment consent to remain behind you in the depth of your comprehension of these matters,” remarked Ivan Il’ich in a cutting and sarcastic tone; “but nevertheless I take the liberty of remarking to you, Stepan Nikiforovich, that you too do not understand me at all.”

“I don’t understand?”

“I continue to hold the idea and propound it everywhere that humaneness, and particularly humaneness to one’s subordinates—from the officials to the clerks, from the clerks to the porters, from the porters to the peasants—humaneness, I repeat, can serve as a cornerstone for the coming reforms, and in general for the regeneration of things. Why? Because—take the syllogism: ‘I am humane, therefore I am loved. They love me, consequently they put trust in me. They put trust—consequently trust—trust consequently love. . . .’ No—I mean—I wanted to say, if they trust, they will also have trust in the reforms, they will understand, so to speak, the very essence of the matter—so to speak, will embrace morally and settle up the whole question, amicably, fundamentally. What are you laughing at, Semen Ivanovich? Is it incomprehensible?”

Stepan Nikiforovich silently raised his brows; he was astonished.

“I fancy I have drunk a little too much,” remarked Semen Ivanovich maliciously, “and therefore I am slow of comprehension—a little foggy in the understanding, sir!”

Ivan Il’ich shrugged his shoulders.

“We shan’t stand the test,” remarked Stepan Nikiforovich, after a short meditation.

“In what way shan’t we stand the test?” asked Ivan Il’ich, surprised at Stepan Nikiforovich’s sudden and abrupt remark.

“No, we shan’t stand it”—Stepan Nikiforovich evidently did

not want to say any more.

"Does your remark refer to new wine and new bottles?" said Ivan Il'ich ironically. "No, sir, I can answer for myself!"

At that moment the clock struck half-past eleven.

"Here we sit and sit, but we really ought to be going," said Semen Ivanovich, preparing to rise from his chair. But Ivan Il'ich was before him. He at once got up, went to the fire-place, and took his sable cap. He looked offended.

"Well, what will you do, Semen Ivanovich? Will you think it over?" said Stepan Nikiforovich as he took them to the door.

"About the flat, sir? I will think it over—I will think it over."

"You will tell me as soon as you have made up your mind?"

"Always talking business?" remarked Mr. Pralinski amicably, trying to attract their attention as he played with his cap. It seemed to him as if they had forgotten him.

Stepan Nikiforovich raised his brows and said nothing, as a sign that he did not want to detain his guests. Semen Ivanovich hastily took leave.

"Well, well . . . after that, have it your own way! If you don't understand simple politeness"—thought Mr. Pralinski, and with a special air of independence he stretched out his hand to Stepan Nikiforovich.

In the lobby Ivan Il'ich wrapped himself up in his light and costly fur coat and tried not to notice Semen Ivanovich's well-worn raccoon. Then they both went downstairs.

"Our old friend seemed offended at something," said Ivan Il'ich to silent Semen Ivanovich.

"No, why should he be?" answered the other quietly and coldly.

"Slave!" thought Ivan Il'ich.

When they came to the porch Semen Ivanovich's sledge with its poor grey horses drove up.

"What the devil—? where has Trifon got to with my carriage?" cried Il'ich, not seeing it drive up.

He looked this way and that, but no carriage was to be seen. Stepan Nikiforovich's man knew nothing about it. He asked Varlam, Semen Ivanovich's coachman, and was told that he had been there all the time, and the carriage too, but now it was not.

"A nasty story," remarked Mr. Shipulenko. "If you like I can take you home."



"These people are rascals!" cried Mr. Pralinski angrily. "The rogue asked to go to a wedding somewhere here on the Petersburg Side; some sort of a *kuma* was to be married, the devil take her! I strictly forbade him to leave this spot. I don't mind betting he has gone there!"

"That is where he has gone," remarked Varlam, "but he promised to be back in a minute, so as to be just in time."

"Quite so! I had a sort of presentiment! He'll catch it!"

"You had better have him whipped at the police station, then he will do your bidding better," said Semen Ivanovich as he fastened the apron of his sledge.

"Please don't trouble about me, Semen Ivanovich."

"Then you don't want me to drive you home?"

"A pleasant journey, *merci*."

Semen Ivanovich drove away, and Ivan Il'ich started on foot along the boards that served as a footpath, feeling very much put out.

"No, you shall catch it now—you rascal! I will go home on foot—just to make you feel, just to frighten you! You'll return and hear that the master has had to go off on foot—you worthless scamp!"

Ivan Il'ich had never before used so much abuse, but this time he was very angry, and in addition he had a buzzing in the head. He was a man who did not drink, so that some five or six glasses soon had an effect on him. The night was enchanting. It was frosty but unusually still and without any wind. The sky was clear and starry. The full moon flooded the earth with a pale silver brightness. It was so fine that after going about fifty paces Ivan Il'ich almost forgot his troubles. For some reason he felt very contented, and people who have had just a little drop too much change their ideas rapidly. He was even pleased with the dowdy houses in the empty streets.

"It's a good thing that I had to start on foot," he thought. "It will be a lesson for Trifon—and a pleasure for me. Indeed I ought to walk more. What does it matter? I shall find a carriage in the Great Prospect at once. What a fine night! What strange little houses they all are! Probably only small people live here—small officials, shopkeepers perhaps. . . . Strange

of Stepan Nikiforovich! How retrograde they all are—what sleepy old fellows! Old dormice—that's exactly what they are! *c'est le mot*. Nevertheless he is a clever man; he has the *bon sens*, the sober practical understanding of things. But all the same, old men, old men! They haven't got the—whatever is it? Well, it's all one—something is lacking. 'We shan't stand the test!' What did he mean by that? He fell into a reverie when he said it. . . . He didn't understand me at all. Why couldn't he understand it? It was more difficult not to understand than to understand. The chief thing is that I am convinced—convinced with my whole soul. Humaneness—love of mankind! To restore man to himself—to restore to him his real worth, and then with the material that is ready to hand you can begin the work! It seems quite clear! Yes, sir. Allow me, Your Excellency, let us take the syllogism: for example, we meet a government clerk, a poor forgotten clerk. Well, who are you? The answer—a government clerk. Very well, a clerk; go on: what sort of a clerk? The answer—such and such a clerk. Have you a job?—Yes. I have! Do you want to be happy?—I do. What do you need to be happy?—This and that!—Why? Because . . . And the man understands me in two words: the man is mine, the man is caught, so to speak, in my nets, and I do with him what I want—that is to say for his own good. Semen Ivanovich is an unpleasant man, and what a nasty face he has got! 'Have him whipped at the police station'—he said that on purpose. Empty words! Whip him yourself—I won't whip him; I will humble Trifon with words, he will be humbled by my reproaches, and then he will *feel*. As for whipping, well—that's an unsettled question. . . . Shall I look in at Emerans's?—Pff, the devil take those damned boards!" he called out as he slipped and almost lost his footing; "—and this is the capital—this is enlightenment! You might break your leg.—H'm, I can't bear that Semen Ivanovich, a most disagreeable person. It was at me he tittered when I said 'morally embrace.' Well, if they do embrace, what is that to you? No fear of my embracing you. I'd rather embrace a peasant. If a peasant meets me, well, I will talk to a peasant. . . . By the by, I was a little drunk, and perhaps did not express myself quite as I should have done. Why, even now, perhaps, I don't express myself quite as I want to. H'm! I'll never drink again. In the evening

you chatter; the next day you repent. Well, anyhow, I'm not staggering in my walk!—All the same they are all rascals!"

These were his reflections, broken and unconnected, as Ivan Il'ich went along the footway. The fresh air had affected him, had, so to speak, shaken him up. In five minutes more he would have calmed down and become sleepy. But suddenly when he was within a few steps of the Great Prospect he heard the sounds of music. He looked around. On the other side of the street, in a very dilapidated wooden house, long but single-storied, a feast was being held; the fiddles squeaked, the double bass droned, and the flutes shrilled, to the tune of a gay quadrille. Under the windows stood an audience, chiefly consisting of women in quilted cloaks with handkerchiefs on their heads; they were trying with all their might to catch some glimpse of what was going on through the chinks of the shutters. Evidently it was all very gay inside. The noise of the thumping feet of the dancers could be heard on the other side of the street. Ivan Il'ich noticed a policeman standing not far away and went up to him.

"Whose house is this, my good man?" he asked, throwing open his costly fur coat just sufficiently to allow the policeman to see the important decoration he wore round his neck.

"The government official Pseldonymov, a *legistrar*," answered the policeman, at once noticing the decoration and drawing himself up.

"Pseldonymov? Bah, Pseldonymov! What? Is he getting married?"

"Yes, he is getting married, your honor, to the daughter of a Titular Councillor. Mlekopitaev is a Titular Councillor—he used to serve in the Courts of Justice. He is giving this house to the bride as dowry."

"So that it is now Pseldonymov's and not Mlekopitaev's house?"

"It is Pseldonymov's your honor. It used to be Mlekopitaev's and now it is Pseldonymov's."

"H'm! I asked you, my friend, because I am his chief. I am the General in charge of the office where Pseldonymov works."

"Just so, Your Excellency." The policeman now stood at attention, and Ivan Il'ich seemed to be thinking. He stood a moment reflecting. . . .

Yes, it was quite true—Pseldonymov was in his office, even in his department, he could well remember that. He had a very small post with a salary of some ten roubles a month. As Mr. Pralinski had only lately taken over his department, it would have been quite excusable if he had not been able to remember all the clerks working under him, but Pseldonymov he remembered on account of his name. It caught his eye the first time he saw it, and he looked curiously at the owner of so strange a name. He remembered now a very young man with a long hooked nose and very light hair that seemed to grow in patches; he was thin and underfed, he dressed in an impossible uniform and impossible, almost indecent inexpressibles. He remembered that at the time the thought had occurred to him to give the poor devil a bonus of ten roubles at New Year for a new rig-out. But as the face of the poor fellow was so cadaverous, and his look so unsympathetic as to amount to repulsiveness, the kind thought had somehow evaporated and in the end Pseldonymov had gone without the bonus. He was all the more astonished when a week before this very Pseldonymov had asked his permission to get married. Ivan Il'ich remembered that at the moment he had had no time to look into the matter more closely, so the question of the marriage was settled casually and quickly. Nevertheless, he distinctly remembered that Pseldonymov was to receive with his bride a wooden house and four hundred roubles in money; this circumstance astonished him at the time; he remembered, too, having made a little joke about the union of the families Pseldonymov and Mlekopitaev. All this he distinctly remembered.

Yes, he remembered all this and became deeper and deeper immersed in thought. We all know how a whole train of thought sometimes passes through our mind in a moment as a kind of sensation not translated into human language, much less into literary language. However, we shall try to render all the feelings that passed through our hero's mind, so that the reader may be able to understand at least the main points, so to speak, of what was most essential and specious in them. There are many of our feelings that, if put into words, would appear quite improbable, and that is why they never see the light but remain hidden away in each of us. Of course the feelings and thoughts of Ivan Il'ich were a little incoherent, but you know the cause of that.

"Now why is it," flashed through his mind, "that we all talk and talk, and when something demands action nothing comes of it? Here's an example—take this very Pseldonymov: he came back a short time ago from his wedding ceremony, full of excitement, hope, the expectation of enjoyment. This is one of the most blessed days of his life. . . . Now he is busy with his guests—giving a feast—a poor, simple feast, but gay and hearty enough. What would happen if he knew that at this moment I—I, his chief, his highest chief—am standing before his house listening to his music?—Yes, upon my word, what would he say then? Yes, and what would happen to him if suddenly I entered the room? H'm! Of course at first he would be afraid of me, he would be struck dumb with confusion. I should disturb him, disconcert him—disconcert them all perhaps!—Yes, it would be so if any other General came in, but not with me. That's just where it lies, any other and not me. . . .

"Yes, Stepan Nikiforovich, you did not understand me just now; here you have a living example.

"Yes, sir. We are all shouting about humaneness, but a heroic act, a great deed, we are incapable of doing!

"What heroic act? Why this! Just think: in the present relations of human society, for me—for me to go into the house of my subordinate, a registrar, on a salary of ten roubles a month—at nearly one o'clock at night would be to cause confusion, it would be turning things topsy-turvy—the last days of Pompeii—absurd! Nobody would understand it. Stepan Nikiforovich would not understand it to his dying day. Didn't he say we shan't stand the test? No, not you old men, paralyzed and inert. But *I* shall stand the test! I will turn the last day of Pompeii into the sweetest day of his life for my subordinate, and turn a wild act into a normal, patriarchal, high, and moral action. How? In this way. Have the goodness to listen. . . .

"Well . . . Let us suppose that I enter: they will be astonished, the dancing will stop, they will look surprised, taken aback. Yes, but it is just here that I shall distinguish myself; I shall go straight up to the frightened Pseldonymov, and with the most amiable smile, but at the same time in the simplest words, I will say, 'You see I have been to his Excellency Stepan Nikiforovich's. I suppose you know him, since you are neighbors. . . .' Then

I'll tell in my most humorous manner the adventure with Trifon. From Trifon I'll proceed to describe how I started on foot. . . . 'Well, I heard music, and was curious to know whence it came, so I asked a policeman, and heard that you, my friend, had just got married. Well, think I, suppose I go into my subordinate's house and see how my clerks amuse themselves—how they get married. I suppose you won't turn me out!' Turn me out? What a word for one who is your subordinate! How would he dare to turn me out! I think he would sooner go mad, he'd run his legs off to get me an arm-chair, would tremble with delight, would not be able to understand it all at first.

"Now, what could be simpler, more refined, than such an action? Why had I come in? That's quite another question. This is, so to speak, the moral side of the matter. That's the pith of it.

"H'm. . . . What was I thinking about?—Oh, yes!

"Well, of course they will make room for me near the most important guests, some sort of Titular Councillor or relation, a retired staff-captain with a red nose.—Some sort of individual like those Gogol describes. Of course I am introduced to the bride, praise her, encourage the guests, beg them not to mind me but go on amusing themselves and dancing. I joke, laugh—in a word, I am charming, amiability itself. I am always amiable and charming when I am pleased with myself. . . . H'm!—That's just it, I am still just a little . . . not drunk, you know, but just . . .

"Of course I, as a gentleman, am on the same footing as the others, I don't for a moment require any special attentions. But morally, morally—that's quite another question; they will understand and value it. . . . My act will arouse their latent nobility. . . . Well, I sit there for half an hour, perhaps even an hour. I shall go away just before supper of course. They will have been busy making preparations, baking and roasting—they will bow low—beg me to remain, but I shall only take one glass to drink the health of the young couple in and refuse to take any supper. I shall say 'Business,' and as soon as I say 'Business,' everyone will assume a respectful and serious expression. By this I shall delicately indicate who they are and who I am—there is a difference. . . . The earth and the sky.—Not that I want to

suggest that, but of course one must—from a moral standpoint it is necessary, whatever you may say. Besides, I shall smile at the same time, perhaps even laugh, and afterwards everyone will approve. . . . I may joke again with the bride; h'm—I can even say—yes, I can hint that I will return again exactly in nine months in the capacity of godfather! He, he! She is sure to have a baby by that time! They breed like rabbits.—Everyone will laugh and the bride will blush; I shall kiss her forehead with feeling, I may perhaps give her my blessing, and—to-morrow in the office everyone will know of my action. But to-morrow I am strict again, to-morrow I am once more exacting, inexorable, but then they all know that I am like that. They know my soul, they know the main point: 'He is strict as a chief—but as a man, why, he's an angel!' And thus I have conquered: I have caught them by one small act which would never have come into your head; now they are mine; I am the father—they the children. Now then, your Excellency Stepan Nikiforovich, go and do the same sort of thing. . . .

"Yes, do you know, do you understand, that Pseldonymov will tell his children how the General himself came to the reception and drank at his wedding? And these children will tell their children, and they to their grandchildren, as the most sacred anecdote, that the leader, the great statesman (I shall be all this by that time) honored them; and so on, and so on. I shall lift up the morally humbled, I shall restore him to himself . . . for does he not get only ten roubles salary a month? I have but to repeat this five times or ten, or something of the same kind, and I shall gain popularity everywhere. I shall be imprinted on all hearts, and the devil only knows what can afterwards be the result of all this popularity!"

In this or almost this way Ivan Il'ich argued with himself. (Well, gentlemen, there are many things a man says to himself at times, especially when he is in a somewhat eccentric condition.) All these arguments flashed through his mind in the space of half a minute, and it is probable that he would have contented himself with these reflections, and merely bringing Stepan Nikiforovich mentally to shame, would have gone quietly home and retired to bed—better for him if he had!—but the whole trouble was, that the moment was an eccentric one.

As if on purpose, at that moment he suddenly pictured to himself in his excited imagination the self-satisfied faces of Stepan Nikiforovich and Semen Ivanovich.

"We shan't stand the test," Stepan Nikiforovich had repeated, smiling haughtily.

"He, he, he!" echoed Semen Ivanovich with his very nastiest smile.

"Let us see whether we shan't stand the test!" said Ivan Il'ich with determination, and his face flushed. He descended from the boarded footpath, crossed the road with firm steps and entered the house of his subordinate, the registrar Pseldonymov.

His star led him on. He passed through the little gate bravely, and contemptuously pushed aside with his foot the long-haired, mangy little dog which more from propriety than from fierceness threw itself at his feet, barking loudly. He went along the boards that led to the front door and the small projecting iron-roofed porch, and going up three very rickety wooden steps found himself in a tiny entrance. Although the end of a tallow candle or a night-light was burning in a corner here, that did not prevent Ivan Il'ich from stepping with his left foot, galosh and all, into a galantine that had been put out to cool. Ivan Il'ich bent down, and peering with curiosity saw that there were two other dishes with some sort of jelly and two moulds evidently full of blanc-mange. The squashed galantine somewhat confused him, and for one short moment the thought crossed his brain, should he not quietly go back? But he considered this too mean. Calculating that nobody had seen him or would be likely to suspect him, he hastily wiped his galosh to conceal all traces, groped about, and found a felt-covered door, which he opened. He stepped into a tiny lobby, half of which was literally filled up with all sorts of cloaks, coats, furs, capes, hoods, caps, scarfs, and galoshes; the other half was occupied by the musicians: two fiddles, a flute, and a double bass, four men in all, who had of course been picked up in the street. They sat at an unpainted table, and by the light of one tallow candle were scraping away vigorously at the last figure of a quadrille. Through the open door the dancers could be seen in a cloud of dust, tobacco smoke, and vapor from the kitchen. It had the look of mad gaiety. You could hear laughter, shouts, and piercing shrieks from the ladies. ~~The man stamped~~



like a squadron of cavalry. Above all the racket there could be heard the commands of the leader of the dance, evidently a wild young man who was quite carried away by the dance. "*Cavaliers, avancez—chaine des dames—balancez,*" and so on, and so on. Ivan Il'ich, not without some emotion, threw off his fur coat and galoshes, and with his fur cap in his hand entered the room. He had by now ceased to reason. . . .

For the first moment nobody noticed him, everybody being too much occupied with the dance that was just coming to an end. Ivan Il'ich stood quite dumbfounded and could distinguish nothing among the general confusion. Ladies' dresses flew past him, men with cigarettes in their mouths hurried by; a pale blue scarf of some lady whirled before his eyes and hit him on the nose; she was followed by a medical student with a flowing mane of dishevelled hair who rushed madly on, pushing him roughly out of the way; a long-legged officer of some unknown regiment, stiff as a milestone, flashed before him; somebody in hurrying by and stamping like the others, cried out in an unnatural, squeaky voice: "Eh, eh, Pseldonimushka!" Under Ivan Il'ich's feet there was something stickly; the floor had evidently been waxed. There must have been about thirty guests in the room (which by the way was a fairly large one).

In another minute the quadrille came to an end, and almost immediately it all turned out exactly as Ivan Il'ich had imagined while he was still thinking on the boarded footway. The guests and the dancers had not had time to regain their breath and wipe the sweat from their brows, when a murmur passed through their ranks, a sort of unusual whisper. All eyes, all heads turned quickly towards the guest who had just entered. Then everyone began gradually to move away and step back. Those who had not noticed him were pulled by their dresses and made to understand. They looked around and at once fell back with the others. Ivan Il'ich was still standing in the doorway, not taking a step forward, and between him and the guests the open space, strewn with numberless papers from sweets, cigarette ends, and tickets, became larger and larger. Suddenly a young man stepped shyly into this space; he had a shock of light-colored hair and a long hooked nose, and he wore the undress uniform of the civil service. He came forward bowing and looked at the uninvited guest with

just the look a dog has when his master calls him to give him a whipping.

"How do you do. Pseldonymov, do you recognize me?" said Ivan Il'ich, and at the same moment felt that he had said it very awkwardly; he also felt that perhaps at that moment he was doing something awfully silly.

"Your Ex-ex-excellency!" stammered Pseldonymov.

"Well, my friend! I came in here quite by chance—as you can probably imagine!"

But Pseldonymov evidently could not imagine anything. With staring eyes he stood there in horrible uncertainty.

"I suppose you will not turn me out. . . . Pleased or otherwise, we have to welcome our guests!" continued Ivan Il'ich, feeling that he was becoming confused to an undignified state of feebleness. He wanted to smile but could not; he felt that his humorous story about Stepan Nikiforovich and Trifon was becoming more and more impossible. All this time Pseldonymov remained immovable as if on purpose, staring at him foolishly. Ivan Il'ich became uneasy; he felt that it only wanted another such minute for the whole thing to become an incredible absurdity.

"Have I in any way disturbed—I will go away . . ." he said in a half audible voice, and some nerve twitched in the corner of his mouth. But Pseldonymov had already recovered himself.

"Your Excellency, pardon me—an honor," he mumbled, bowing hastily; "have the goodness to be seated," and recovering still further he pointed with both hands to the sofa from which the table had been removed to make room for the dancing.

Ivan Il'ich's soul was eased and he sank down on the sofa; at the same moment some one hastened to move a table towards it. He looked round and saw that he alone was seated; all the others, even the ladies, remained standing—A bad sign!—But the moment had not yet arrived to reassure and encourage them. The guests still retreated, and it was Pseldonymov alone who stood before him bowing low and far from smiling, for he could as yet not in the least understand what was happening. The moment was short but horrible. Our hero felt so much distress in that moment that this invasion of his subordinate's home, performed on the principles of a Haroun-al-Raschid, might well be looked upon as a heroic exploit. Suddenly another figure appeared next

to Pseldonymov and began bowing too. Ivan Il'ich recognized, to his inexpressible pleasure, not to say delight, the head clerk of his department, Akim Petrovich Zubikov, with whom, of course, he was not acquainted, but whom he knew as a business-like and silent official. He at once got up and offered Akim Petrovich his hand, his whole hand and not two fingers. Akim Petrovich received it in both of his with the greatest respect. The General triumphed; the situation was saved.

In fact, from that moment Pseldonymov became, so to speak, not the second but the third person. Ivan Il'ich could now tell his story to the head clerk, accepting him at this hour of need as a friend, not to say an intimate, while Pseldonymov could stand by all the time in silence, trembling with devotion. Consequently propriety was observed. The story was necessary—Ivan Il'ich felt this, he saw that all the guests expected something, that in the two doorways all the inhabitants of the house were crowded, almost climbing on each other's shoulders to look at him and to hear him speak. The only thing that was unpleasant was that the head clerk, out of sheer stupidity, still did not sit down.

"Why do you not . . . ?" said Ivan Il'ich, awkwardly pointing to a place on the sofa next to himself.

"Excuse me, Excellency—this will do for me," and Akim Petrovich quickly sat down on a chair which was rapidly placed for him by Pseldonymov, who himself remained stiffly standing.

"Can you imagine such an occurrence?" began Ivan Il'ich in a somewhat uneven but already confident voice, addressing himself exclusively to Akim Petrovich. He drew out his words, divided the syllables, put special stress on some letters, stopped in places, and even to himself acknowledged that he was speaking with affectation, but was unable to regain full mastery of himself; some external force seemed to act on him. At that moment he became painfully conscious of a great many things.

"—Just fancy, I had come away from Stepan Nikiforovich Nikiforov's—you may have heard of him, the Privy Councillor—don't you remember—on that commission . . ."

Akim Petrovich respectfully bent his whole body forward: "I couldn't fail to know of him, sir!"

"He is now your neighbor," continued Ivan Il'ich, and for a moment, mainly from propriety but also to relieve the strain, he turned to Pseldonymov; but he soon turned away again as he

noticed by Pseldonymov's eyes that it was a matter of no consequence to him.

"An old man, as you know, who dreamed all his life of buying a house. At last he has bought one—and a very nice house too. Yes—and to-day was his birthday—he has never celebrated it before, and had even kept the date a secret from us—avoided it from stinginess! He, he! And now he was so pleased with his new house that he invited me and Semen Ivanovich—you know him—Shipulenko?"

Akim Petrovich bowed again, bowed profoundly! Ivan Il'ich was somewhat reassured. It had crossed his mind that the head clerk might perhaps guess that at that moment he was a necessary *point d'appui* for his Excellency. That would be the worst thing that could possibly happen.

"Well, we sat there, the three of us, and he gave us champagne. We talked of business, this, that, and the other—the questions of the day—we got to arguing! He, he!"

Akim Petrovich raised his eyebrows respectfully.

"But that is not the point. We took leave of him—he's a very regular old gentleman, pedantic, goes to bed early, you know—old age! We went out of the house and—my Trifon was not there. I was annoyed and made inquiries: 'What has become of Trifon and my carriage?' It appeared that, expecting me to be late, he had gone off to the wedding of some *kuma* or sister—Heaven only knows who!—somewhere here on the Petersburg Side, and had taken the carriage with him!" Out of propriety the General again glanced at Pseldonymov. He duly bowed, but not at all as he should have done to a General! "There's no sympathy in his heart," shot through Ivan Il'ich's brain.

"Whoever heard of such a thing?" said Akim Petrovich with great astonishment, and a low murmur of surprise passed through the whole company.

"You can imagine my position," Ivan Il'ich looked all around. "There was nothing else to be done, so I started on foot. I thought if I could get as far as the Great Prospect I should be sure to find a cab there. He, he!"

"Hi, hi, hi!" respectfully echoed Akim Petrovich. Again a murmur, this time of merriment, passed through the crowd. At that moment the lamp glass of one of the wall lamps broke with a

great crack. Some one hurried to pick up the pieces. Pseldonymov started and looked fiercely at the lamp, but the General did not take the slightest notice of it, and quiet reigned once more.

"I am walking along—the night is so fine, so calm. Suddenly I hear music, footsteps, dancing. Out of curiosity I ask a policeman: 'Pseldonymov's wedding.' Yes, my friend, are you not giving a fine ball to the whole Petersburg Side? Ha, ha!"—he laughed again, turning suddenly to Pseldonymov.

"Hi, hi, hi! Yes, sir!" echoed Akim Petrovich; there was again a movement among the guests, but the stupidest part of it was that even now Pseldonymov did not smile, although he bowed again. He seemed to be made of wood. "He must be a fool!" thought Ivan Il'ich; "why, a donkey would have smiled, and then all would go on swimmingly." He became impatient. "I thought I would look in at my subordinate's. He won't turn me out; pleased or not pleased, we have to welcome our guests, you know. Forgive me; if I am disturbing you at all, I can go away. I only came in to see. . . ."

Little by little there was a general movement. Akim Petrovich put on his sweetest smile, as if to say: "How could your Excellency disturb us?" The guests began to move and show the first signs of freedom of manners. Most of the ladies had already sat down. The boldest of them ventured to fan themselves with their handkerchiefs—a good and positive sign. One lady in a shabby velvet dress began to speak in a loud voice. The officer to whom she addressed herself wanted to answer her in a loud voice, but as they were the only two speaking he refrained. The men, who were mostly government clerks, with a few students among them, looked about as if urging one another to be more free—coughed—even began to move a step or two in various directions. Nobody was specially awkward, but all were shy, and almost all secretly felt hostility to the person who had come to disturb their gaiety. The officer, ashamed of his pusillanimity, began gradually to approach the table.

"Listen, my friend, may I ask you what is your name and patronymic?" Ivan Il'ich asked Pseldonymov.

"Porfiry Petrov, your Excellency," he answered, with his eyes staring as if he were on parade.

"Porfiry Petrov, won't you introduce me to your young wife? Conduct me—I . . ."

He seemed inclined to rise, but Pseldonymov hurried to the drawing-room as fast as his legs would carry him. The bride was standing at the door so he had not far to go, but as soon as she heard that the conversation had turned on her she quickly hid. In a minute Pseldonymov returned leading her by the hand. Everybody made way for them. Ivan Il'ich ceremoniously rose from the sofa and addressed her with his most amiable smile.

"I am very, very glad to make your acquaintance," said he with the most aristocratic inclination, "especially on such an occasion."

He continued to wear his stereotyped smile. The ladies were pleasantly agitated.

"*Charmée*," said the lady in the velvet dress, almost aloud.

The bride was worthy of Pseldonymov. She was a thin little lady of barely seventeen, with a very small pale face and sharp little nose. Her small piercing eyes, that glanced rapidly about, did not appear in the slightest degree confused, but on the contrary looked fixedly at him with an expression—one might almost say—of mischief. Evidently Pseldonymov had chosen her for her beauty. She was dressed in a white muslin dress over a pink slip. Her neck was thin, her body that of a chicken, her bones all seemed to protrude. She had nothing to say in reply to the General's greeting.

"You've got a very pretty little wife," he continued in a low voice as if only addressing Pseldonymov, but in such a way that the bride should hear him. But again Pseldonymov had nothing to say, and this time even did not bow. It seemed to Ivan Il'ich almost as if he saw something cold and concealed in his eyes, as if there were something special, something malignant on his mind. But whatever it might cost, it was necessary to get to his better feelings. That was the object of his being there.

"A fine sort of couple," he thought. "However—" and he again turned to the bride, making place for her on the sofa beside him; but to the two or three questions he addressed to her he again got only "yes" or "no" for a reply, and these words he could scarcely hear.

"If she only were a little confused," he continued to reflect, "I could then venture on a joke. As it is, my position is helpless." Even Akim Petrovich remained silent, as if on purpose; it was just stupidity, but all the same unpardonable. "Ladies and gentle-

men, I hope I have not interfered with your amusement," he said, addressing the whole party. He felt that the palms of his hands were perspiring.

"No, no, sir! Do not trouble yourself about that, your Excellency, we shall soon begin again; we are just getting cool, sir," answered the officer. The bride looked at him approvingly; the officer was not old and wore the uniform of some obscure detachment. Pseldonymov stood in the same place and his nose seemed to stick out farther than ever. He stood there like a lackey holding his master's fur coat and waiting for the end of his good-byes. This remark Ivan Il'ich made to himself; he began to feel lost; he had a feeling of awkwardness, of terrible awkwardness, as if the ground were slipping from under his feet, as if he had got in some place from which he could not get out, as if he were in the dark.

Suddenly every one stepped back and a short, stumpy woman appeared. She was no longer young; dressed very simply though evidently with an attempt to be smart, she had a large shawl on her shoulders, fastened at the throat, and a cap to which she seemed unaccustomed. She had in her hands a small round tray on which stood a full but already uncorked bottle of champagne and two glasses, no more and no less. The bottle was evidently destined for only two of the guests.

The elderly woman came straight up to the General.

"I beg your Excellency not to be exacting," she said with a bow; "since you have condescended to come to us to honor my son's wedding with your presence, do us the favor of drinking the health of the young couple. You will not refuse to do us that honor?"

Ivan Il'ich caught at her as if for salvation. She was not at all an old woman, only about forty-five or six—not more. But she had such a good, rosy face, such an open, round, Russian countenance—she smiled so good-naturedly, bowed so simply—that Ivan Il'ich was almost comforted and began to hope again.

"So you—you are the—er—mother of your son," he said, rising from the sofa.

"My mother, your Excellency," mumbled Pseldonymov, stretching out his long neck and poking his nose forward.

"Ah, very pleased—very pleased to make your acquaintance."

"Your Excellency has no objection——?"

"With the very greatest pleasure!"

The tray was placed on the table, Pseldonymov jumped forward to pour out the wine, and Ivan Il'ich, still standing, took a glass.

"I am particularly—specially glad of this opportunity, that I can—" he began "—that I may—with this express— In short, as your chief—I wish you, madam" (and he turned to the bride), "and you, friend Porfiry—I wish you every possible prosperity and long happiness!"

And he emptied his glass with feeling; it was the seventh that evening. Pseldonymov looked serious, even gloomy. The General began to hate him heartily.

"And here's this big blockhead" (he looked at the officer) "standing there—why doesn't he shout 'Hurrah'? Then everything would go all right."

"And you too, Akim Petrovich, drink a glass and congratulate them," said the old woman, turning to the head clerk. "You are his chief, he is your subordinate. Look after my son, I ask you, for his mother's sake! Do not forget us in time to come, my dear friend, Akim Petrovich, you are such a good, kind man!"

"How charming these old Russian women are!" thought Ivan Il'ich. "She has put life into us all. I always loved the people!"

At that moment another tray was brought and placed on the table. It was carried by a girl in a rustling chintz dress that had not yet been washed and a crinoline. The tray was so large that she was hardly able to hold it in her two hands. On it were numberless small plates, with apples, sweets, candied fruits, fruit pastilles, nuts, and other refreshments. The tray had till then been standing in the drawing-room as refreshment for all the guests, especially the ladies, but now it was brought in for the General only.

"I hope your Excellency will not disdain our victuals! One must be content with what one has got!" said the old woman, bowing again.

"With pleasure," said Ivan Il'ich, as he took a nut, which he broke between his fingers. He decided to make himself popular to the end.

At that moment the bride began to giggle.



"What is the joke?" asked Ivan Il'ich, pleased to see any sign of life.

"It is only Ivan Kosten'kinych making me laugh," she answered bluntly.

The General looked round and noticed a very good-looking, fair-haired youth who was trying to hide behind a chair on the other side of the sofa, and who was whispering something to Mme. Pseldonymov. The youth got up. He was evidently very young and bashful.

"I was telling her about the Dream-book, your Excellency!" he mumbled as if to excuse himself.

"What sort of a 'Dream-book'?" asked Ivan Il'ich condescendingly.

"There is a new Dream-book, sir, a fine book, sir. I told her, sir, that if one dreamed of M. Panaev, that meant one would spill coffee on one's shirt front, sir."

"What *naïveté!*" thought Ivan Il'ich with irritation. The youth, who had become very red while he spoke, was very pleased with himself for having told this story about M. Panaev.

"Yes, yes, I have heard of it," replied his Excellency.

"No, but there is something better still," began another guest close to Ivan Il'ich. "A new dictionary is being published, and it is said M. Kraevsky will write articles on Alferaki . . . and polemical literature." This was said by a young man, who far from being confused was rather bold. He wore a white waistcoat and gloves, and had a hat in his hand. He did not dance, but looked on condescendingly, as he was on the staff of the satirical magazine, the *Firebrand*, gave tone to the company, and had come to the wedding by chance as Pseldonymov's honored guest. The young men were on very intimate terms, having a year previously shared their poverty and the corner of a room in a lodging-house kept by a German woman. He was not averse from drinking vodka, and had already more than once absented himself for that purpose and retired to a back room, to which all knew the way. He annoyed the General very much.

"And this is amusing, sir—" interrupted the fair-haired youth who had told the story of the shirt-front, on whom the journalist in the white waistcoat looked with hatred,—"it is amusing, your Excellency, because the author assumes that M. Kraevsky does

not know how to spell and thinks that "polemical literature" is written with 'pa'!"

The poor youth was hardly able to finish. He saw by the General's eyes that long ago he had understood what was meant, and that the General also looked a little confused just because he knew it. The young man became incredibly ashamed of himself. He was able to efface himself somewhere and was very sad for the rest of the evening. In his place the bold journalist on the *Firebrand* came still nearer, and appeared to have the intention of taking a seat in the vicinity of the General, a liberty which seemed to Ivan Il'ich somewhat embarrassing.

"Come, Porfiry, will you tell me," began the General for something to say—"I always wanted to ask you personally—why are you called Pseldonymov and not Pseudonymov? Surely you ought to be called Pseudonymov?"

"I can't tell you the exact reason, your Excellency," answered Pseldonymov.

"It is probably his father, sir, when he entered the service; there was some mistake in the papers, so that he has remained Pseldonymov," explained Akim Petrovich, "such things do occur, sir."

"Cer-tain-ly," said the General hotly. "Cer-tain-ly, because—you can judge for yourself—Pseudonymov has its origin in the literary word 'pseudonym,' but Pseldonymov does not mean anything."

"It was through stupidity, sir," added Akim Petrovich.

"How—in what way through stupidity?"

"The Russian people, often through their stupidity, change the letters, sir, and pronounce them in their own way, sir. Take as an example they say 'nevalid' when they ought to say 'invalid,' sir."

"Oh, yes, 'nevalid,' he, he, he!"

"They also say 'mumber,' your Excellency," broke in the tall officer, who had long been itching to distinguish himself.

"What do you mean by 'mumber'?"

"'Mumber' instead of 'number,' your Excellency."

"Oh yes, just so, 'mumber' instead of 'number.' . . . Oh yes, yes. . . . he, he, he!" Ivan Il'ich was obliged to laugh at the officer's joke.

The officer arranged his tie.

"And they also say 'bast,'" explained the contributor to the *Firebrand*, but his Excellency tried not to hear him. He was not going to laugh for everybody.

"'Bast' instead of 'past,'" persisted the journalist with evident irritation.

Ivan Il'ich looked severely at him.

"Why are you making a nuisance of yourself?" whispered Pseldonymov to the journalist.

"What do you mean? I am just conversing. Can't one even speak—" the latter began to argue in a whisper, but he soon stopped and left the room in a huff.

He went straight to the attractive back room where, for the benefit of the gentlemen, there stood all the evening a small table covered with a Yaroslav linen table-cloth, on which were laid for their delectation two sorts of vodka, a herring, pressed caviare cut into small pieces, and a bottle of the very strongest sherry from the national wine-cellar. With bitterness in his heart he had just poured himself out a glass of vodka when the medical student with the dishevelled hair rushed into the room. He was the chief dancer and leader of the dances at Pseldonymov's ball. With hasty greediness he seized the bottle.

"It's going to begin directly," said he hurriedly, as if giving orders. "Come and look; I shall give them a solo standing on my head, and after supper I shall risk a *can-can*. It will be just suitable for a wedding—a sort of friendly hint to Pseldonymov. She's a fine woman, that Cleopatra Semenovna; you can risk anything you like with her."

"He's a retrograde," the writer answered gloomily, as he emptied his glass.

"Who is a retrograde?"

"That person, the one they have just put the sweets in front of. A retrograde! . . . I assure you."

"Get along," mumbled the student and hurried out of the room as the ritornelle of the next quadrille was heard.

The contributor to the *Firebrand*, left alone, poured himself out another glass to strengthen his courage and independence, drank it off, and helped himself to a snack; never before had his Excellency the Privy Councillor Ivan Il'ich made for himself a

more bitter enemy or a more implacable avenger than he had in the slighted collaborator of the *Firebrand*, especially after two glasses of vodka. Alas, Ivan Il'ich never suspected anything of that nature. He never even suspected another very important fact which had an influence on all the subsequent mutual relations of the guests and his Excellency. The fact is, that though he had on his side given a proper and even minute explanation of his presence at the wedding of his underling, his explanation did not really satisfy anybody, and the guests continued to feel shy. But suddenly everything changed as if by enchantment, the company became calm and ready to enjoy themselves again, to laugh, shout, dance, just as if the unexpected guest were not in the room. The cause of it was that in an unaccountable manner a rumor, a whisper, the news gradually spread all over the room, that the guest "seems just a little . . ."—"under the influence of . . ." Though at first this appeared like a terrible calumny, little by little it seemed to be justified, so that at last it was all quite clear. More than that, at the same time they all felt unusually free and easy. It was at this moment that the quadrille, the last before supper, began, the dance to which the medical student hastened back.

Ivan Il'ich was just going to address the bride again, and this time he hoped to get the better of her shyness by some joke, when the tall officer came up and with a great flourish sank down on one knee before her. She at once jumped up from the sofa and fluttered away with him to take a place in the quadrille; the officer made no excuses, and she did not so much as look at the General as she went away; it seemed as if she were glad to escape from him.

"After all," thought Ivan Il'ich, "she had every right to do so, and one can't expect good manners from them—H'm! well, friend Porfiry, don't stand on ceremony," he said, turning to Pseldonymov; "perhaps there is something that requires your attention, or something perhaps that—please don't mind me, please feel no restraint. . . . Why is he standing guard over me?" he added to himself.

It became unbearable to have Pseldonymov with his long neck standing near him, and to see his staring eyes fixed attentively on him. In a word, this was not the thing, not at all the thing; but Ivan Il'ich was still far from confessing it to himself.

The quadrille begin.

"Will your Excellency permit me . . . ?" asked Akim Petrovich, respectfully taking up the bottle ready to fill his Excellency's glass.

"I—I really don't know if——"

But Akim Petrovich with a bright smile of devotion had already poured out the champagne. Having filled one glass, he proceeded secretly and stealthily, and with many grimaces, to fill his own too, with this difference, that his own glass was about a finger-breadth less full, which seemed more respectful. Sitting next to his immediate superior he felt like a woman in labor. What was he to talk about? He was bound to amuse his Excellency, such was his duty—had he not the honor of his company? The champagne served as a resource, and indeed it proved most agreeable to his Excellency that he had poured it out—not for the sake of the champagne, for it was warm and the most ordinary mediocre stuff, but morally agreeable.

"The old fellow wants a drink himself," thought Ivan Il'ich, and dare not without me. Why should I stop him? It would be silly if the bottle stood between us untouched."

He sipped his wine; it was at any rate better than sitting there doing nothing.

"I am here—" he began, stopping and emphasizing each word: "I am here, as it were, by chance, and, of course, it is probable that some will consider it improper—so to speak—for me to be in such company."

Akim Petrovich was silent and listened with timid curiosity.

"But I hope you will understand why I am here. It is not just to drink wine that I have come! He, he!"

Akim Petrovich wanted to echo his Excellency's laugh but missed fire, and again remained silent, not answering him a single consoling word.

"I am here, so to speak, to approve . . . to show—so to speak—morally the object . . ." continued Ivan Il'ich, getting vexed with Akim Petrovich's slowness of comprehension, but suddenly he became silent too. He saw that poor Akim Petrovich lowered his eyes in a guilty way. The General in slight confusion hastily took another sip from his glass, and Akim Petrovich, as if his whole salvation consisted in so doing, seized the bottle and re-filled it.

"You certainly have not much to say," thought Ivan Il'ich, looking sternly at poor Akim Petrovich, who, feeling the stern eyes of the General on him, decided to continue his silence and not lift his own. In this way they remained seated opposite each other for about two minutes, two very painful minutes for Akim Petrovich.

We must say just a word or so about Akim Petrovich. A man as quiet as a hen, he was of quite the old-fashioned stamp, brought up to servility, and at the same time a good and even a noble man. He was one of the Russians of Petersburg, that is to say, he and his father and his grandfather had been born and brought up and had served in Petersburg and had never once left that town; such people constitute quite a peculiar Russian type. They have hardly any knowledge of Russian and are not at all troubled at their ignorance. All their interests are concentrated on Petersburg and mainly on the office in which they are employed. All their solicitude is centered in a game of preference at copeck points, in their shop, and in their monthly salary. They do not know a single Russian custom nor a single Russian song except "Chips," and that only because the street organs play it. There are two essential and unfailing signs by which you can instantly distinguish a real Russian from a Petersburg Russian. The first is that no Petersburg Russian ever says "the *Petersburg Journal*," but always "the *Academical Journal*"; the second and equally important sign is that they never say "*Zavtrak*" (for breakfast or lunch), but always "*Frühstück*," with a special accent on the "*Früh*." By these rooted and characteristic signs you can know them anywhere. They are a humble type that has been definitely formed during the last thirty-five years. Akim Petrovich was, however, no fool. If the General had asked him about something suitable to his understanding, he would have answered quite appositely and would have even sustained the conversation, but it would have been indecent for a subordinate to answer such questions, although Akim Petrovich was dying to know something more definite as to what his Excellency's intentions were.

In the meantime Ivan Il'ich fell more and more deeply into reflection and into a kind of confusion of ideas. From thoughtlessness and absence of mind he more and more often took a sip at

his glass. Akim Petrovich lost no time in zealously filling it up again. Both men were silent. Ivan Il'ich at last began to look at the dances; before long they interested him. Suddenly something surprised him.

The dances were really very gay. Here they danced in the simplicity of their hearts, for amusement, and even with abandon. There were very few good dancers but many awkward ones, who stamped about with such vigor that they might have been taken for good. The person who distinguished himself most was the officer. He especially liked the figures where he remained the only dancer and performed a sort of solo. In this he bent about with remarkable agility; sometimes, though normally straight as a milestone, suddenly bent so much to one side that one thought he was sure to fall over, but with another step he suddenly bent to the opposite side at the same acute angle with the floor. All the time his face wore a serious expression, and he danced in the full conviction that everyone was admiring him. Another dancer went to sleep near his partner during the second figure, having had more than was good for him before the quadrille began; his lady had to dance alone. A young registrar who was dancing with the lady in the blue scarf always made the same joke in every figure and in all the five quadrilles danced that evening; he remained a little behind his partner, seized the end of her scarf, and while in the act of crossing to his vis-à-vis rapidly pressed a few dozen kisses on it. His partner floated before him as if quite unconscious of what he was doing. The medical student, as he had promised, executed a solo on his head, and thereby caused furious delight, stampings of applause and shouts of pleasure. In a word, there was a great lack of restraint. Ivan Il'ich, the wine beginning to have an effect on him, at first smiled, but little by little a bitter feeling of doubt began to creep into his soul; of course he was very fond of unconstraint and freedom of manners—he had wanted it, had heartily invited it at the moment when they had all stepped back from him, but now this same freedom of manner seemed to be getting out of bounds. For instance, the lady in the well-worn velvet dress that she had bought not second but fourth hand fastened it with pins during the sixth figure in such a way that it looked as if she had trousers on. This lady was the Cleopatra Semenovna with whom you could risk

anything, as her partner the medical student had said. There is no need to speak of the medical student, he was a regular Fokin. Why was it that a moment ago they all fell back and now were so emancipated? It might be nothing, but the change seemed strange: it predicted something. It was as if they had quite forgotten that Ivan Il'ich was in the world. Of course he was the first to laugh, and had even risked some applause. Akim Petrovich tittered in unison, though it was evidently mixed with pleasure, and he never suspected that his Excellency was beginning to nourish a new worm in his heart.

"You dance very well, young man," Ivan Il'ich felt himself called upon to say to the student when he passed by at the end of the quadrille.

The student turned sharply round, made a grimace, and approaching his face—quite indecently close—to his Excellency's, crowed like a cock at the top of his voice. This was too much; Ivan Il'ich got up from the table. Despite this movement there was a roar of laughter, for the imitation of the crowing of a cock was very natural and the grimace so unexpected, Ivan Il'ich was still standing there in doubt, when Pseldonymov appeared and bowing begged him to come to supper. His mother followed him.

"*Batyushka*, your Excellency," she said bowing. "Do us the honor—do not disdain our poverty. . . ."

"I—I—really, I don't know," began Ivan Il'ich: "it was not for this . . . I—I wanted to be going. . . ."

It is true he held his fur cap in his hand. Moreover, at that moment he gave himself his word of honor that he would go away at once, whatever it might cost, that nothing would induce him to stay . . . and yet he stayed. A minute later he led the procession to the supper table, Pseldonymov and his mother going before to clear the way. He was placed in the seat of honor, and again a fresh bottle of champagne appeared before him. For *hors d'oeuvres* there were herrings and vodka. He stretched out his hand, filled himself a large wine-glass of vodka, and drank it off. He had never drunk vodka before. He felt as if he were rolling down a hill—flying . . . flying . . . flying . . . that he must stop himself—catch hold of something, but there was no possibility of doing so. . . .



In fact, his position became more and more eccentric. More than that, it seemed to be a sort of mockery of fate. God only knows what had happened to him in the space of an hour. When he had entered the house he had stretched out his arms, so to speak, to embrace the whole of humanity and all who were subordinate to him; and now hardly an hour later he felt and knew with pain in his heart that he could not bear Pseldonymov, and cursed him, his wife, and his wedding. Not only this, but he also saw in Pseldonymov's face, in his eyes, that he too could not bear his chief; he looked, almost said: "Go to the devil, you damned old creature! What brought you here to sit on my shoulders?" He had long ago read all this in Pseldonymov's eyes.

Of course Ivan Il'ich, as he sat down to table, would sooner have had his hand chopped off than confess honestly aloud, or even to himself, that it had really turned out in the way it had. That moment had not yet arrived; he was still in a sort of moral equilibrium. But his heart—in his heart there were gnawings. It wanted to be free, to escape into the air, to rest. Ivan Il'ich was indeed too good a man.

He knew, yes, he knew very well that he ought long ago to have left, not only to have left but really to have escaped and saved himself; that everything was suddenly turning out not in the way, not at all in the way, he had planned while walking on the boarded footpath.

"Why did I come here? Did I come here to eat and drink?" he asked himself as he ate the herring. He had arrived at a state of negation. There were moments when in his heart of hearts he looked ironically at his own action. He began not to understand why he had come at all!

"How could he go away now? To go away before he had accomplished what he wanted to do was impossible. What would people say? They would say that I haunt improper places. It certainly would seem like that if I did not finish what I came for. What will they say to-morrow (because, of course, it will be talked of everywhere)—what will Stepan Nikiforovich, Semen Ivanovich, say—what will be said in the Chancery, at Shembel's, at Shubin's? No, I must leave in such a way that they will all understand why I came, I must reveal my moral intention."

But unfortunately the psychological moment would not pre-

sent itself. "They do not even respect me," he continued to think. "What are they laughing at? They are so free—as if they have no feelings . . . Yes, I have long suspected that the whole of the younger generation is feelingless! I must stay, whatever it may cost me. Now they are dancing, but at supper they will all be collected together . . . I shall talk of the questions of the day—of reforms—of the greatness of Russia . . . I may yet carry them with me! Yes, perhaps nothing is lost as yet. Perhaps it is always thus in reality. How ought I to begin so as to interest them? What turn should I give to the conversation? I feel lost . . . quite lost. And what do they want, what do they need? I see that they are laughing among themselves. Surely not at me? Good Lord!—what do I want? Why am I here? Why don't I go away? What do I expect to accomplish?" Such were his thoughts, and a sort of shame, a sort of deep, unbearable shame began to tear at his heart.

Thus things moved on, one step leading to another.

It was just two minutes after he had taken his seat at the table that a terrible thought seized hold of his whole person. He suddenly felt horribly drunk, that is to say, not tipsy as he was before but completely drunk. The cause of it was the glass of vodka he had drunk just after champagne, which instantly took effect. He felt and perceived in his whole being that he was becoming positively feeble. Of course his courage increased greatly, but his consciousness did not desert him and cried to him: "It is wrong, very wrong, absolutely indecent." Of course his wandering drunken thoughts could not remain fixed on any one point; there appeared in him suddenly, quite tangibly, two opposite sides: on the one side was swagger, the desire to conquer and to destroy all obstacles, and a foolhardy certitude of being able to attain his object; the other side made itself felt by a painful melancholy of the soul and a sort of sinking of the heart: "What will they say? How will all this end? What will happen to-morrow—to-morrow—to-morrow?"

Earlier in the evening he had had a dull presentiment that he had enemies among the guests. "It must be because I was drunk when I came," he thought with torturing doubt. What then was his horror when he now became convinced by unmistakable

signs that some of those at the table were really his enemies and that this fact could no longer be doubted!

"And why? What can be the reason?" he wondered.

All the guests, about thirty in number, were seated at the table, some of them already quite done for. The others behaved in a very careless, malignant, independent manner, shouted, spoke in very loud voices, proposed toasts at the wrong moment, and bombarded the ladies with little pills of bread. One very ill-favored personage in a dirty frock-coat fell off his chair at the beginning of supper and remained on the floor till the end of it. Another wanted to get on the table to propose a toast, and it was only the officer who, by pulling at his coat-tails, managed to check his premature excitement. The supper was quite plebeian, although a chef, the slave of some general, had been hired to prepare it; there was a galantine, tongue and potatoes, cutlets and green peas; there was also a goose, and, to finish up with, blanc-mange. The drinks were—beer, vodka, and sherry. The only bottle of champagne stood before the General, which obliged him to pour it out for himself, as Akim Petrovich did not dare to act on his own initiative at supper. The toasts had to be drunk by the other guests in bitters or whatever came to hand. The table was composed of a number of small tables placed side by side, including a card table, and they were covered with several small table-cloths, one of which was a Yaroslav colored one. The guests sat alternately ladies and gentlemen. Pseldonymov's mother would not sit down, but moved about seeing that all was in order and that everybody was served. Instead, a malignant-looking female, with a tied-up face, who had not appeared before, came forward in a sort of red silk gown and high cap. She proved to be the bride's mother, who had at last agreed to come out of some back room to the supper. Until that moment she had not appeared owing to her irreconcilable enmity with Pseldonymov's mother; but of this we shall speak later. This lady looked at the General with animosity and even with derision, and evidently did not want to be introduced to him. This female seemed to Ivan Il'ich to be highly suspicious. There were also others who seemed to him suspicious, and suggested involuntarily danger and uneasiness. They seemed to be forming a sort of conspiracy against him. In any case, that is how it appeared to him, and the whole of supper he became

more and more convinced that it was so. For instance, there was one malignant-looking gentleman with a small beard, an artist of some kind, who looked at Ivan Il'ich several times, and then turned to his neighbor and whispered something in his ear. Another, a student, who it must be confessed was quite drunk, showed nevertheless some suspicious signs. There were small hopes of the medical student; even the officer was not to be relied upon. But quite special and evident hatred shone from the eyes of the journalist: he had such a way of lolling in his chair, such a proud and arrogant manner of looking at him, and sniffed with such independence. Although the other guests paid no attention to the "journalist," who had only written four lines of verse for the *Firebrand* and had consequently become a liberal: although, too, it was evident that he was not liked by them, still when a small bullet of bread, clearly aimed at him, fell near Ivan Il'ich, he was ready to have his head chopped off if the guilty thrower of that bullet was not the gentleman of the *Firebrand*.

All this had a most lamentable effect on him.

There was still another observation that was specially unpleasant for him. Ivan Il'ich became quite convinced that there was beginning to be a want of distinctness in his words; it was hard to pronounce them; there was much he wanted to say, but his tongue would not move; also, that from time to time he began to forget himself, and above all that for no reason he would suddenly sniff and then laugh, although there was nothing to laugh at. This disposition soon passed away after drinking a glass of champagne; although Ivan Il'ich had poured it out for himself, he did not want to drink it, but suddenly emptied it quite unintentionally. After this glass he almost wanted to cry. He felt that he was falling into the most sentimental sensitiveness; he again began to love, to love all, even Pseldonymov, even the journalist. He wanted to embrace them, to embrace them all, to forget and be reconciled with them all. Not only that; but he wanted to speak to them quite openly, to tell them everything; that is to say, what a good and kind man he was, and what splendid abilities he possessed. How useful he would be to his country, how well he could amuse the ladies, and above all, what a progressive man he was, how humanely he was ready to condescend to anyone, even the very lowest, and finally, in conclusion, to tell them

quite openly the motives that had induced him to come uninvited to Pseldonymov's wedding, drink two bottles of his champagne, and make him happy by his presence.

"The truth, the sacred truth, above all, the frankness. I will win them by frankness. They will believe me, all is clear to me; they are looking at me with enmity now, but when I tell them all, I shall conquer them irresistibly. They will fill their glasses and with shouts drink my health. The officer, I am sure, will break his glass on his spur. Perhaps they will even shout hurrah! Perhaps if they think of tossing me, as the Hussars do, I would not resist that; it would be a very good thing. I shall kiss the bride on the forehead; she's a pretty little thing. Akim Petrovich is also a very nice man. Pseldonymov will of course get better in time. He only wants, so to speak, the polish of the world. . . . And although that sincere delicacy is certainly wanting in the whole of the new generation, yet—yet I shall tell them of the new destiny of Russia among the other European powers. I will also mention the peasant question and . . . and they will all love me and I shall leave the house with glory!"

These thoughts certainly were very pleasant, but what was unpleasant was that, in the midst of all these rosy hopes, Ivan Il'ich suddenly discovered in himself an unexpected ability, that of spitting. In any case his spittle seemed to jump out of his mouth quite against his will. He observed it first of all on Akim Petrovich, whose cheek he had sprinkled, and who, out of respect, sat still and did not dare to wipe it off; Ivan Il'ich took a napkin and did so for him. But as he did it, it seemed to him so absurd, so far removed from common sense, that he became silent and began to wonder. Akim Petrovich, though he too had had some drink, sat there like a plucked chicken. Ivan Il'ich realized now that he had been talking to him for nearly a quarter of an hour on a most interesting subject, and that while Akim Petrovich listened to him, he seemed to be confused, not to say alarmed at something. Pseldonymov, who was sitting one chair away from him, also stretched out his long neck, and, with his head on one side, seemed to be listening to him with a most unpleasant expression on his face. He really seemed to be keeping guard on him. Casting his eyes on the guests he observed that many of them were looking straight at him and laughing. But, what was

strangest of all, this did not make him feel in the least confused; on the contrary, after taking another sip at his glass, he began to talk in a voice that could be heard by all present.

"I have just said," he began in a very loud voice, "I have just said, ladies and gentlemen, to Akim Petrovich, that Russia—especially Russia . . . in short, you understand what I—I—I want to—to say. Russia is passing through, to my profoundest conviction, hu-hu-maneness. . . ."

"Hu-humaneness" was echoed from the other side of the table.

"Hu-hu!"

"Tu-tu!"

Ivan Il'ich stopped. Pseldonymov jumped up from his chair and began looking round to see who had cried out. Akim Petrovich stealthily shook his head as if to admonish the guests. Ivan Il'ich saw that clearly, but obstinately took no notice of it.

"Humaneness!" he continued emphatically; "not long ago . . . just so—not long ago I said to Stepan Niki-ki-forovich . . . yes . . . that—that the renewal, so to speak, of things——"

"Your Excellency!" somebody called out very loud from the other end of the table.

"What can I do for you?" answered Ivan Il'ich, interrupting his speech and trying to see who had called to him.

"Nothing at all, your Excellency, I was carried away; go on! go-go-go on!" the same voice answered.

Ivan Il'ich drew himself together.

"The renewal, so to speak, of these very things."

"Your Excellency!" called the same voice.

"What do you want?"

"How do you do?"

This time Ivan Il'ich could stand it no longer. He broke off his speech and turned to this disturber of the order, to this offender. He was quite a young schoolboy who had got very drunk, and who aroused in him great suspicion. For a long time he had been shouting, and had broken a glass and two plates, affirming that it was the proper thing to do at weddings. At the moment that Ivan Il'ich turned to him the officer was just beginning to rebuke this shouter soundly.

"What do you mean by this behavior? why are you shouting? You ought to be kicked out!"

"It's not about you, your Excellency, not about you! proceed!" cried the tipsy schoolboy, falling back on his chair. "I am listening, and am very, ve-ry, ve-ry much satisfied with you. It is praiseworthy—most pr-praiseworthy?"

"A drunken schoolboy!" said Pseldonymov in a whisper.

"I see that he is drunk, but——"

"I have just told an amusing story, your Excellency!" began the officer, "about a young lieutenant of our regiment who talked in the same way to his superiors. This young man is imitating him. At every word his superior said he repeated 'Praiseworthy, praiseworthy!' It was that got him discharged from the service ten years ago."

"Wha—wh—at lieutenant was it?"

"One in our regiment, your Excellency. He was mad on praising. At first he was admonished gently, but afterwards he was put under arrest. The chief treated him as a parent would, but he only said, 'Praiseworthy, praiseworthy!' And strange to say, this officer was a manly fellow—over six foot. At first they wanted to have him tried, but remarked that he was insane."

"So he's a schoolboy! Well, for schoolboy tricks one need not be very strict. I on my part am ready to forgive . . ."

"There was a medical examination, your Excellency."

"So they dis-sec-ted him?"

"Good gracious, he was quite alive, sir!"

The guests, who had till then behaved very correctly, greeted this remark with loud and general peals of laughter. Ivan Il'ich became fierce.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," he cried, not stuttering at first. "I am quite in a position to be able to understand that one does not dissect a live man. I thought that owing to his madness he was no longer alive—that is to say, was dead. . . . That is, I wanted to say . . . that you do not love me . . . while I love you all. Yes, I even love Por—Porfiary. . . . I am demeaning myself by speaking in this way. . . ."

At that moment a large bit of spittle fell from Ivan Il'ich's lips on to the table-cloth on a most visible spot. Pseldonymov hurriedly wiped it up with his napkin. This last misfortune completely crushed him.

"Gentlemen, this is too much!" he cried in despair.

"The man is drunk, your Excellency," Pseldonymov repeated again.

"Porfiry! I see that you . . . all . . . yes! I say that I hope—yes, I ask you all to say: In what way have I demeaned myself?"

Ivan Il'ich was almost crying.

"Your Excellency, how can you think such a thing, sir?"

"Porfiry, I appeal to you . . . Tell me: if I came—yes; yes—to the wedding . . . I had an object. I wanted to raise morally . . . I wanted you to feel . . . I appeal to you all. Have I lowered myself much in your eyes or not?"

There was a dead silence. That is just it: there was a dead silence, and to such a categorical question too! "Well, what would it have cost them to shout at such a moment?" shot through his Excellency's head. But the guests only looked at each other. Akim Petrovich sat there more dead than alive, while Pseldonymov, dumber than ever from fear, repeated to himself the terrible question that had long been haunting him: "What shall I get for all this tomorrow?"

Suddenly the contributor to the *Firebrand*, who, although very drunk already, had been sitting all the time in gloomy silence, addressed himself frankly to Ivan Il'ich, and with flashing eyes began to answer him in the name of the whole party.

"Yes," he shouted in a loud voice, "yes, sir, you have lowered yourself—yes, sir, you are a retrograde.—Ret-ro-gra-de."

"Young man, remember whom you dare to address in that way," cried Ivan Il'ich, jumping up from his chair in a fury.

"I am addressing you and I am not a young man! You came here to give yourself airs and to court popularity!"

"Pseldonymov, what is this?" cried Ivan Il'ich.

Pseldonymov jumped up in such a fright that he stopped as still as a post, and did not know what to do. The guests were struck dumb in their places. The artist and the schoolboys applauded and shouted, "Bravo! Bravo!"

The journalist continued to shout with irresistible fury:

"Yes, you came here to boast of your humaneness! You have upset everyone's enjoyment. You have been drinking champagne without a thought that it was too expensive for a government clerk on a salary of ten roubles a month. I suspect that you



are one of those chiefs who regard the young wives of their subordinates as toothsome morsels. More than that—I am sure you support the spirit monopoly! Yes, yes, yes!”

“Pseldonymov, Pseldonymov!” cried Ivan Il’ich, stretching his arms towards him. He felt that every word the writer said was a fresh dagger in his heart.

“All right, your Excellency, directly; please do not be uneasy, sir,” said Pseldonymov with energy, and going up to the gentleman of the *Firebrand*, took him by the coat collar and dragged him away from the table. It was quite incredible that a weakling like Pseldonymov could show so much physical strength, but the journalist was very drunk, and Pseldonymov quite sober. He gave him several blows in the back and pushed him out of the door.

“You are a lot of scoundrels!” shouted the journalist. “I will caricature you all to-morrow in the *Firebrand*!”

The whole party jumped up from their places.

“Your Excellency, your Excellency!” cried Pseldonymov and his mother, and several of the guests surrounding the General, “Your Excellency, pray be calm!”

“No, no!” cried the General. “I am ruined! I came here . . . I wanted—so to speak—to baptize . . . And this is what’s come of it—what’s come of it!”

He fell back in his chair, almost unconscious, and put his two arms on the table; his head sank on them straight into a plate of *blac-mange*. Nothing can describe the general consternation. A minute later he arose, evidently in the desire to go away, but he staggered, tripped over the leg of a chair, fell down full length on the floor, and began to snore. . . .

Indeed, this does happen to sober people when they accidentally get drunk. To the last stroke, to the last moment they retain consciousness, and then suddenly fall as if mown down. Ivan Il’ich lay on the floor, having lost all consciousness. Pseldonymov clutched at his hair, struck dumb at the situation, the guests began hastily to disperse, each commenting on the occurrence in his own way. It was already three o’clock.

The chief thing is that Pseldonymov was in a much worse position than one would suppose, even when judging it by all the unattractiveness of the present surroundings. While Ivan Il’ich is

lying on the floor and Pseldonymov standing near him tearing his hair in desperation, we will break the thread of our story for a moment to give a few words of explanation about Porfiry Petrovich Pseldonymov.

It was not more than a month before his wedding that he was near being irretrievably lost. He came from some distant government where his father had held a small post and had died while awaiting his trial for some offense. About five months before his wedding Pseldonymov, after nearly starving in Petersburg for a whole year, obtained his appointment at a ten rouble salary, and he seemed as one risen from the dead, in body and mind, only to be soon crushed again by circumstances. He and his mother, who had left their provincial town after his father's death, were quite alone in the world. The mother and son nearly perished in the frost, feeding on all sorts of questionable victuals. There were even days when Pseldonymov went with a mug to the Kontanka to get a drink of water there. When he got his job he and his mother managed to live somehow in the corner of a room. She went out washing, and he by dint of strict economy succeeded in scraping together in four months enough to get boots and a warm coat. The misery he had to endure in his office too: his chief asked him when he had last been to the Russian baths. It was whispered that under the collar of his uniform a whole nest of bugs were housed. But Pseldonymov had a strong character. In appearance he was meek and quiet, he had received but little education, and he was hardly ever heard to talk. I don't know if he ever thought, if he ever made plans or formed systems, if he ever reflected on anything. But in place of this a sort of instinctive, wriggling, unconscious determination to extricate himself from his evil circumstances and put himself on a better footing developed in his mind. He had the tenacity of the ant; if you destroy an ant's nest, they at once begin to repair it; you destroy it again, and they again recommence building it up, and so on unceasingly. He was a constructive and domesticated creature. It was written on his forehead that he would make his way, build his nest, and perhaps even lay up a store. His mother was the only creature in the whole world who loved him, but she loved him passionately. She was a strong, untiring, hard-working woman, but at the same

time kind. It is probable that they would have continued to live in their corner for five or six years more in the hopes of better times if they had not met the retired Titular Councillor Mlekopitaev, who had been treasurer in a government office in the little town they came from, but had since retired and settled down with his family in Petersburg. He knew Pseldonymov and had been under some sort of obligation to his father. He had not much money, of course, but he had some—how much nobody knew, not even his wife, nor his eldest daughter, nor his relations. He had two daughters, and as he was very obstinate, a drunkard and a domestic tyrant, and besides this an invalid, he decided to marry one of his daughters to Pseldonymov. "I know him," he said; "his father was a good man, and the son will be a good man too." Whatever Mlekopitaev wanted to do he did; once said, it must be done. He was a strangely obstinate man. He passed most of his time sitting in an arm-chair, as he was deprived of the use of his legs by some sort of illness, which, however, did not prevent him from drinking vodka. He spent whole days drinking and swearing. He was a malicious man who always had to be worrynig some one. For this purpose he had several distant female relatives living in his house—his sister, a sick and quarrelsome woman, two of his wife's sisters, both bad-tempered and long-tongued, and besides these his old aunt, who had somehow broken a rib. He also kept in his house a Russified German for the talent she had of relating stories out of the *Arabian Nights*. His only pleasure was to bully these unfortunate women, who lived on his charity, to swear at them every minute for everything under the sun, and none of them, not even his wife, who had been born with a chronic toothache, ever dared answer him a word. He tried to make them quarrel among themselves, invented and encouraged all sorts of tale-bearing and dissensions, and then laughed with delight when he saw them quarreling and almost at blows. He was very glad when his eldest daughter, who had lived in miserable poverty for ten years with her officer husband, became a widow and returned with her three sickly little children to live with him. He could not bear her children, but as with their appearance the number of victims on whom he could try his daily experiments increased, the old man was very much delighted. All this crowd

of malicious women and sick children were huddled together with their torturer in this small wooden house on the Petersburg Side. They were under-fed, because the old man was miserly and only gave out money by kopecks, though he never grudged it for his vodka; they never had sleep enough because the old man could not sleep and required to be amused. In a word, they all were miserable and cursed their fate. It was at that time that Mlekto-pitaev first saw Pseldonymov. He was surprised at his long nose and humble manners. His plain and sickly youngest daughter was then just seventeen. She had gone at one time to some German school, but she never learned much more than her letters. She had grown up, scrofulous and anæmic, under the crutch of her crippled and drunken father, in the uproar of domestic quarrels, tale-bearings, spyings, and slanders. She never had any companions, nor any sense either. She had long wanted to get married. In company she was silent, but at home with her mother and their hangers-on she was malicious and as sharp as a gimlet. She especially loved to pinch and slap her sister's children, to tell tales about them, how they stole sugar and bread, which caused never-ending disputes between her and her elder sister. The old man himself proposed that Pseldonymov should marry her. Wretched though his condition was he still asked for a little time to reflect. He and his mother consulted long together. The house was to be transferred to the bride's name, and though it was a small one, and a wooden one, and a bad one, all the same it was worth something; and besides that, the old man promised four hundred roubles—when could one collect as much oneself? "Do you know why I want to take a man into the house?" cried the obstinate old drunkard. "First because you are all women, and I am tired of women. I want him too to dance to my fiddle, because I am his benefactor. Secondly, I take him in because you all don't want it and are angry. I do it to pay you out. What I say I will do. And you, Porfiry, thrash her when she becomes your wife; ever since she was born she has had seven devils in her. Drive them all out and I'll prepare a crutch!"

Pseldonymov remained silent, but he had already made up his mind. He and his mother had been taken into the house before the wedding; they were washed, and dressed, and shod, and

given money for the wedding. The old man took them under his protection, perhaps because the whole family was against them. Pseldonymov's old mother pleased him so much that he even refrained from bullying her. As for Pseldonymov, a week before the wedding he made him dance a *kazachek* for his amusement. "Well, that's enough," said he at the end of the dance; "I only wanted to see if you would not forget yourself before me." He gave them scarcely enough money to pay for the wedding and then invited all his relations and friends. From Pseldonymov's side the only people asked were the writer for the *Firebrand* and Akim Petrovich, the honored guest. Pseldonymov knew very well that the bride looked upon him with aversion, and wanted to marry the officer, not him. But he put up with everything as it had been arranged with his mother. The whole of the wedding day and the whole evening the old man sat drinking and using the very worst language. Owing to the wedding all the family had to take refuge in the back rooms, and were squeezed together so that the air grew foul. The front rooms were arranged for the ball and the supper. At last, when at about eleven o'clock the old man fell asleep, dead drunk, the bride's mother, who had been especially angry with Pseldonymov's mother all day, made up her mind to lay aside her anger, replace it by graciousness, and appear at the ball and supper. The arrival of Ivan Il'ich had changed everything. Mrs. Mlekopitaev became shy; she was offended, and stormed at them all because she had not been informed that the General himself had been invited. She was assured that he had come unasked, but she was so stupid that she did not believe it. It was thought necessary to serve champagne. Pseldonymov's mother had only one rouble. Pseldonymov himself had not a kopeck, so they had to bow down to cross old Mrs. Mlekopitaev and ask her for money first for one bottle of champagne, then for another. They represented to her all the future advantages for Pseldonymov in his official career, the connection and the rest—they persuaded her at last and she gave the money, but she made Pseldonymov drink such a cup of gall and bitterness that several times during the evening he had to run away to the little room where the bridal bed, destined for the delights of Paradise, had been prepared, and throwing himself on it silently tear his hair while he trembled all over with impotent rage. Yes, Ivan Il'ich did not know what the two bot-

bles of champagne he drank that evening had cost. Imagine Pseldonymov's horror, distress, and despair when this incident with Ivan Il'ich came to such an unexpected end. He saw before him again all sorts of trouble, perhaps for the whole night—the screams and tears of the capricious bride; the reproaches of the bride's stupid mother. His head was aching already, his eyes were blinded by bad aid and darkness, and here was Ivan Il'ich requiring assistance. Now, at three o'clock in the morning, it was necessary to find a doctor, or a carriage to take him home, and it must be a carriage, because it would be impossible to send such a personage home in a simple cab in the state he was in. But where was he to find the money for a carriage? Old Mrs. Mlekopitaev, enraged that the General had not said two words to her nor even looked at her the whole of the supper, declared that she had not a kopeck. It is quite possible that she had really not a kopeck, but where was it to be found? What was he to do? There really was some reason for him to tear his hair.

In the meantime Ivan Il'ich had been placed on a little leather sofa that stood in the dining-room. While the others were clearing the things away and separating the tables, Pseldonymov went about trying to collect money from all sides—he even tried to borrow from the servant—but nobody had any. He risked asking Akim Petrovich, who had stayed longer than the others. But he, kind as he was, at the sound of money became so perplexed, one may say so frightened, that he talked all sorts of unexpected nonsense. "Another time, with pleasure," he mumbled, "but now, I must beg to be excused." And taking up his cap he hurried out of the house. Only the kind-hearted youth who had told the story about the interpreter of dreams was of some little if untimely assistance. He also remained longer than the others, as he took a sincere interest in Pseldonymov's misfortunes. At last Pseldonymov, his mother, and the youth decided, after a consultation, that it would be better not to send for a doctor, but only a carriage to take the invalid home, and for the present, until the carriage arrived, to take some simple homely measures to bring him to, such as wetting his head and temples with cold water, applying ice to the crown of his head, and so on. Pseldonymov's mother undertook to see to this. The youth ran off

to look for a carriage. As at that time of night it was difficult to find even a cab on the Petersburg Side, he had to go some distance to a cab stand to rouse up a coachman. Then began a long bargaining; the coachman said that at such an hour of the night five roubles would be too little to take for a carriage, but at length he agreed to come for three. But when the youth, at nearly four o'clock, arrived in the carriage at Pseldonymov's, they had already changed their minds. It appeared that Ivan Il'ich, who was still unconscious, had become so ill, had groaned so much, and thrown himself about so wildly that it would be quite impossible to move him; and to take him home in such a condition might be dangerous. "What will be the end of it all?" asked Pseldonymov, quite discouraged. What was to be done? A new question arose: if the invalid was to be kept in their house, where were they to put him, where was he to be carried to? In the whole house there were only two beds, one a large double bed, in which old Mlekopitaev and his wife slept, the other a new imitation walnut double bedstead, which had been bought lately and destined for the young couple. All the other inhabitants of the house slept on the floor, lying side by side mostly on feather beds, which were worn and smelly and highly unsuitable, and even of these there were only just enough for them all, and hardly that. Where could they put the invalid? A feather bed might yet be found, someone might give hers up, but then where to put it? It was decided that the bed must be made up in the drawing-room, as it was farthest away from the rest of the family and had a separate exit. But on what was the bed to be made up? Would it be possible on chairs? It is well known that only grammar-school boys who come home for the week-end are made to sleep on chairs; but for a personage like Ivan Il'ich it would be very disrespectful. What would he say tomorrow when he found himself lying on chairs? Pseldonymov would not hear of it. There was only one thing left to be done—to carry him to the bridal couch. This bridal couch, as we have already said, had been arranged in a little room off the dining-room. On the bedstead was a recently bought mattress that had never been used, clean bed linen, four pillows in rose-colored calico slips under flounced muslin covers, and a coverlet of pink satin quilted in an elaborate pattern. From a gilt ring above the bed hung muslin curtains. In a word, it was all as it ought to be for a bride, and

the guests, who had nearly all been in the room, had admired the arrangements. The bride, who could not bear Pseldonymov, had several times during the evening come stealthily into the room to look at it. What was her indignation and her anger when she heard that they wanted to carry the invalid, who had been attacked with something like chlorine, and put him in her bridal bed! The bride's mamma took her part, scolded, and threatened to complain next day to her husband, but Pseldonymov showed his authority and insisted on it. Ivan Il'ich was carried to the bed, and a feather bed was made up for the young couple in the drawing-room. The bride whined and was ready to pinch, but did not dare disobey. Her papa had a crutch with which she was well acquainted, and she knew very well that the next day papa would require a report about certain things. To comfort her they brought into the drawing-room the pink satin quilt and the pillows with their muslin covers. At that moment the youth arrived with the carriage; hearing that it was no longer required he was terribly frightened. He would be obliged to pay for it, and he had never had a twenty-kopeck piece in his pocket. Pseldonymov declared himself completely bankrupt. They tried to persuade the cab-man, but he began to make a row and even to knock at the shutters. How this all finished I don't quite know. I believe the youth went as a prisoner in the carriage to the Peski to the fourth Rozhdestvenskaya street, where he hoped to wake up a student, who was passing the night with some friends, in the expectation of getting some money from him. It was already five o'clock when the young couple were left alone, locked up in the drawing-room. Pseldonymov's mother remained for the night near the bed of the sufferer. She lay down on a carpet on the floor and covered herself up with her fur coat, but she could not sleep, as she had constantly to get up; Ivan Il'ich was very sick. Pseldonymov's mother was a very magnanimous and brave woman; she undressed him, took off all his clothes, and looked after him as if he had been her own son, and the whole night she had to carry the necessary vessel out of the room and bring it in again. However, the misfortunes of this night were even yet not over.

Ten minutes had hardly passed from the moment the young couple were locked up alone in the drawing-room when suddenly



a piercing cry was heard, not a cry of joy but a cry of a most evil kind, and immediately afterwards the cracking noise of falling and breaking chairs. In an instant, an unexpected crowd of sighing and frightened women, in all stages of undress, rushed into the still darkened room. These women were the bride's mother, her elder sister, who had deserted her sick children for the time, and her three aunts, including the one with the broken rib. The cook was there too, and the German woman with the talent for telling stories, from under whom her feather bed had been taken by force for the use of the young couple (it was the best one in the house and her own and only property), came along with the rest. All these respectable and sharp-sighted women had already a quarter of an hour earlier found their way through the kitchen and passage on tiptoe and had been listening in the lobby, eaten up by a quite incomprehensible curiosity. When somebody lighted a candle they saw an unexpected sight. The chairs, which only supported the broad feather-bed at the sides, had separated under the double weight and the feather bed had fallen between them to the floor. The bride was whimpering with anger; this time she was insulted to the heart. Pseldonymov, morally a dead man, stood there like a criminal taken in an act of crime. He did not even try to defend himself. "Ah's" and "Oh's" and other cries were uttered on all sides. Hearing the noise, Pseldonymov's mother came running in, but this time the bride's mother had a complete victory. She began by assailing Pseldonymov with strange and mostly quite unjust reproaches, saying, "What sort of a husband are you, sir, after this? What are you fit for, sir, after this disgrace?" and so on, ending by taking her daughter by the hand and leading her away from her husband to her own room, taking on herself all the responsibility of the explanation that the fierce old father would require on the morrow. All the others went after her sighing and shaking their heads. Only his mother remained and tried to console Pseldonymov, but he at once sent her away, too.

He did not require consolation. He went to the sofa and sat down as he was, barefoot and only in the most indispensable under-linen, in a fit of the most morose irresolution. His thoughts crossed and re-crossed and got mixed in his head. Sometimes he mechanically looked round the room where so lately there had been such wild dancing and where the air was still full of

the fumes of tobacco. Cigarette-ends and papers from sweets still littered the besprinkled and dirty floor. The ruined bridal couch and the overturned chairs bore witness to the instability of the very best and truest of earthly hopes and dreams. He sat thinking thus for nearly an hour. Only heavy thoughts came to his mind, such as, what awaited him now in his office? He was painfully conscious that he would have to change the place of his employment, however much it cost him; it would be impossible to stay in the same office after the events of the past night. He thought of Mlekopitaev, who next day might again make him dance a *kazachek* to test his meekness. He remembered that although Mlekopitaev had given fifty roubles to defray the expenses of the wedding, which had all been spent to the last kopeck, he had not given him the four hundred roubles promised as dowry, nor had there been any further mention of them. Even the house had not as yet been legally transferred. He also thought of his wife, who had abandoned him at the most critical moment of his life; he thought of the tall officer who had gone down on one knee before her. He had had time to notice this. He thought of the seven devils that were in his wife according to the testimony of her own father, and of the crutch that was prepared to drive them out. Of course he felt that he had the strength to bear much, but fate had, after all, heaped on him so many surprises that in the end he began to doubt his own strength.

Such were Pseldonymov's sad thoughts. In the meantime the candle end burnt out, and its dying light falling straight on Pseldonymov's profile cast its shadow in a colossal shape on the wall, with his long neck and large hooked nose and two locks of hair sticking out from his forehead and the back of his head. At last, when the coolness of morning began to make itself felt, he got up shivering and numbed in body and soul, went as far as the feather bed that was lying between the chairs, and without arranging anything, without blowing out the candle, without even putting a pillow under his head, crawled on all fours on the bed and fell asleep with the leaden, dead sleep of those who are condemned the next day to a public execution.

On the other hand what could compare with the night of agony passed by Ivan Il'ich Pralinski on poor Pseldonymov's marriage bed? For some time pains in the head, vomitings, and other unpleasant attacks did not leave him for a moment. These were

hellish sufferings, but the consciousness that visited his mind only in flashes lighted up such hosts of terror, such gloomy, repulsive pictures, that it was better he should not come to himself. Confusion still reigned in his head. He recognized Pseldonymov's mother, heard her mild exhortations, of this kind—"Be patient, ducky—be patient, my dear—what can't be cured must be endured"—he recognized her but could give himself no logical reason for her being there. He had all sorts of disgusting visions: most often he saw Semen Ivanovich, but when he looked more attentively he observed that it was not Semen Ivanovich at all but Pseldonymov's nose. The free artist, the officer, and the old woman with the tied-up face all flitted before him. The thing that interested him most of all was the gilt ring hanging from the ceiling from which the muslin curtains were suspended. He could see it quite distinctly by the faint glimmer of the candle-end which alone gave light to the room, and he was always trying to understand what was the object of that ring, why it was there, what it meant. Several times he asked the old woman about it, but evidently he said something different from what he wanted to say, for he could not make her understand, however much he tried to explain what he wanted. At last towards morning the attacks ceased and he fell asleep, and slept soundly without dreams. He slept for about an hour, and when he awoke he was almost fully conscious, with only an unbearable pain in his head and the worst of tastes in the mouth and on his tongue, which seemed like a bit of cloth. He sat up in bed, looked round, and tried to think. The faint light of the breaking day that came through the shutters in a narrow streak trembled on the wall. It was about seven o'clock in the morning. But when Ivan Il'ich suddenly remembered and understood all that had happened to him the evening before; when he remembered all the incidents of supper, his unsuccessful exploit, his speech at table; when he realized with terrible clearness what might result from all this, what people would think and say about him; when he looked round and saw, at last, to what a sad and unseemly state he had reduced the peaceful marriage couch of his subordinate; oh, then such deadly shame, such torture, seized his heart that he cried out and covering his face with his hands fell back on the pillow in despair! About a minute later he jumped out of bed, saw that his clothes were all lying on a chair

well cleaned and neatly folded, and hastily seizing them, began hurriedly to dress, looking round as if in fear of something horrible. Here, too, on another chair were his fur coat and his fur cap with his yellow gloves lying in it. He wanted to slip away unobserved, but suddenly the door opened and Pseldonymov's old mother entered, bringing an earthenware basin and jug. She had a towel hanging over her shoulder. She put the basin down, and without further ceremony told him that he must wash first.

"This will never do, *Batyushka*; you must wash—you can't go without washing."

At that moment Ivan Il'ich confessed to himself that if there were a single person in the whole world before whom he was not ashamed and of whom he was not afraid, it was this old woman. Then he washed. Long after, in hard moments of his life, he remembered among other qualms of conscience all the circumstances of this awakening, this earthenware basin and china jug, filled with cold water in which bits of ice were still floating, and the oval cake of soap with raised letters wrapped in pink paper which must have cost fifteen kopecks and had evidently been destined for the bride, but which had to be given up to Ivan Il'ich, and the old woman with a damask linen towel over her left shoulder. The cold water revived him; he wiped himself, and without saying a word, not even thanking his sister of mercy, he seized his cap, threw the fur coat handed him by Pseldonymov's mother over his shoulders, and hurried out through the passage and kitchen, where the cat was already mewing and the cook raised herself on her bed of straw to look after him with greedy curiosity. He ran through the yard to the street and threw himself into a passing cab. The morning was frosty; a frozen yellow fog hung about the houses and bedimmed everything. Ivan Il'ich turned up his collar. He thought that everybody was looking at him, that everybody knew him, that they would all get to know . . .

For eight days he never left his house and never appeared at his office. He was ill, painfully ill, but more morally than physically. In those eight days he passed through a lifetime in hell, and they will no doubt be put to his credit in the next world. There were moments when he thought of becoming a monk—

there were indeed, for his fancy began to divert itself very much in this direction. Visions presented themselves to him of the calm, subterranean singing, the open coffin, the life in a solitary cell, wood, or cave, but recovering himself he at once confessed that it was all terrible nonsense and exaggeration, and he was ashamed of it. Then began moral attacks concerning his *existence manquée*. Then shame burst out again in his soul, instantly conquering it and burning it up; it corroded everything. He shuddered as various pictures rose in his mind. What will they say about him, what will they think about him, how will he ever be able to enter his office again, what whispers will pursue him for a whole year—for ten years—for his whole life! This story about him will be handed down to future generations. There were moments when he fell to such a degree of pusillanimity that he was ready to go at once to Semen Ivanovich, beg his pardon, and ask his friendship. He did not justify himself even, he blamed himself entirely; he could find no excuse for himself and was ashamed at not being able to.

He also thought of resigning his appointment at once and quietly devoting himself in solitude to the happiness of humanity. One thing was certain in any case; he must change all his acquaintances and do it in such a way that all recollection of him would be rooted out. Then, again, it occurred to him that this was all nonsense, and that a redoubled severity with his subordinates might put the whole matter right. From that moment he began again to hope and regain courage. At last after eight days of doubt and suffering he felt that he could bear the uncertainty no longer, and one fine morning decided to go to the office.

While he was sitting at home sorrowing, he had pictured to himself a thousand times how he would enter his office. He had the terrifying conviction that he would certainly hear ambiguous whispers, would see ambiguous faces, would have to face malignant smiles. What was his surprise when in reality none of this occurred. He was received respectfully; everyone bowed to him, was serious, was occupied with his work. His heart was filled with happiness by the time he got to his private room.

He began at once to devote himself to business, listened to several reports and explanations, and gave his decisions. He felt that he had never before reasoned so justly or decided so wisely or in such a business-like manner as on that morning. He saw

that they were satisfied with him, that they honored him, that they treated him with respect. The most sensitive susceptibility could not have noticed anything. Everything went off splendidly.

At last Akim Petrovich appeared with a bundle of papers. At his appearance something seemed to prick Ivan Il'ich's heart for a moment, but only for a moment. He began to attend to Akim Petrovich, spoke with great importance, pointed out to him how matters were to be settled, and explained the way to do it. He only noticed that he avoided looking too long at Akim Petrovich, or it might be better to say that Akim Petrovich was afraid of looking at him. At last Akim Petrovich finished his business and began to collect his papers.

"There is another request," he began dryly; "the clerk Pseldonymov begs to be transferred to the department of . . . His Excellency Semen Ivanovich Shipulenko has promised him a post. He begs the gracious co-operation of your Excellency."

"Oh! so he wishes to be transferred," said Ivan Il'ich, and he felt that a great load had been removed from his heart. He looked at Akim Petrovich and at that moment their eyes met.

"Why not? I for my part—I will use my . . ." answered Ivan Il'ich, "I am ready . . ."

It was apparent that Akim Petrovich was anxious to slip away, but suddenly Ivan Il'ich in a burst of nobility finally decided to speak out. He had evidently again an inspiration.

"Tell him," he began, looking straight at Akim Petrovich with a look full of deep meaning—"tell Pseldonymov that I have no spite against him, that I don't wish him any harm! On the contrary, that I am ready to forget all the past, to forget everything . . . everything . . ."

Suddenly Ivan Il'ich stopped, struck with surprise at Akim Petrovich's strange behavior. He, a sensible man, for some unknown reason seemed to have become suddenly a terrible fool. Instead of listening, and listening to the end, he blushed, blushed to the last stage of stupidity, and began hastily, one might almost say with indecency, to bow with short little nods and at the same time to step backwards towards the door. His whole appearance showed that his only wish was to sink through the earth or, more precisely, to get back to his desk. When he was left alone, Ivan Il'ich rose in confusion from his chair. He looked in the glass but did not see his face.

"No! severity, just strict 'severity!'" he murmured almost unconsciously to himself, and suddenly a bright red suffused his face. He became ashamed of himself, he felt a heaviness on his soul, in a way he had never experienced during the most unbearable moments of his eight days' illness. "I have not stood the test," he said to himself, and sank into his chair quite overcome.

## VSEVOLOD MIKHAYLOVICH GARSHIN

1855—1888

One of Russia's greatest short-story writers. His experience as a soldier in Russia's war against Turkey gave him the background for many of his stories. Became insane, and died a suicide. His stories are vivid, but impregnated with typical Russian gloom.

### THE SIGNAL

SEMEN Ivanov was a watchman for the railroad. From his watch-house to the nearest stations it was on one side twelve versts and on the other ten versts. About four versts distant a large mill had been started during the preceding year, and its tall dark chimney was visible beyond the wood; nearer than this, except for the watch-houses like the one in which he dwelt, there was no human habitation.

Semen Ivanov was a sick and broken man. Nine years before he had served as orderly to an officer and had gone through a whole campaign with him. He had been hungry, cold, baked in the sun; he had tramped forty or fifty versts in heat and frost; he had been under fire, but, thank God, not a bullet had touched him. For an entire week the regiment had been in the front line, under the constant fire of the Turks, who were on the other side of a little hollow; from morning till night the firing never ceased. Semen's officer too was in the front line. Three times a day Semen brought him his rations and a hot samovar from the regimental kitchen in a ravine. He had to traverse an open space with the samovar, and the bullets sang about him and rattled on the stones. Semen was afraid; he wept; but still he went on. He was in great favor with the officers—they always had their hot tea. He returned from the campaign without a wound, but he had pains in his arms and legs. Since that time he had suffered many misfortunes. He went home. His old father died; his four-year-old son died also, of a bad throat. Semen and his wife alone remained. The farm-work did not prosper—how could it? It is hard to plough with swollen hands and feet. At last they could no longer endure life in their old village; so they went to new places in quest of happiness. Semen and his



wife had looked for work on the railroad, in Kharkov and on the Don. They met with luck nowhere. Then his wife went into service and Semen continued to roam about. Once it was necessary to travel by train. At one little station he peered out, and seemed to recognize the station-master. Semen looked at him, the station-master looked at Semen. They knew each other; Semen remembered the other as officer in his regiment.

"You are Ivanov?" he asked.

"That's right, your honor, that's me."

"How did you get here?"

Semen told him all about it.

"Where are you going now?"

"I don't know, your honor."

"What's that, you fool, you don't know?"

"Just so, your honor, because there isn't anywhere I can offer myself. I must just go on looking for some sort of work, your honor."

The station-master looked at him, reflected, and then said: "Look here, my friend; stay at the station for the time being. You're married, I think. Where's your wife?"

"Just so, your honor, I'm married. My wife is in service with a merchant, in Kursk."

"Well, then, write to your wife and tell her to come here. I will get a free pass for her. One of our watchmen's houses will soon be vacant. I'll speak to the chief of this section about you."

"I am much obliged, your honor," said Semen.

So he stayed at the station. He helped in the station-master's kitchen, chopped wood, swept the yard and the platform. After a fortnight his wife arrived, and Semen took their things to his watch-house on a hand-cart. The watch-house was new and warm. He could have as much wood as he liked; the last occupant had left a small kitchen-garden; there was almost half an acre of tillable land along the line. Semen was filled with joy. He began to plan how he would till the land, and buy a cow and a horse.

They gave him all that was necessary for his work: a green flag and a red one, a lantern, a horn, a hammer, a wrench to tighten the nuts, a crowbar, a spade, a broom, bolts, clasp-hooks; they gave him besides two books—the rules and the timetable. At first Semen was unable to sleep at night—he was always

poring over the time-table; if a train were due two hours hence he would tramp over his beat, and then sit down on the bench by his house and look and listen if the rails trembled—if the sound of the train could not be heard. He learned the rules by heart, and although he could read only by spelling out each word, he managed to learn them all.

It was summer and the work was easy; there was no snow to clear away. There were but few trains on that line. So all that Semen had to do was to pass along the stretch in his charge twice a day, tighten a nut here and there, arrange the ballast, look to the drain-pipes, and then return home and occupy himself with the cultivation of his field. But in his home work there was one drawback: whenever he wanted to do anything, he had first to ask permission of the roadmaster, who had in turn to consult the chief of the section, and by the time the permission was granted the time for doing the work was past. Semen and his wife began to feel dull.

About two months went by, and Semen began to make friends, with the neighboring watchmen. One was a very old man; it was constantly rumored that he would be replaced, for he was hardly able to go out of his house. His wife used to look after the line for him. The other watchman, who was nearer to the station, was a thin and muscular young chap. Semen first encountered him along the line at the point where their beats coincided. Semen removed his cap and bowed.

"Good health to you, neighbor," he said.

His neighbor looked at him askance.

"Good day," he replied, and turning round went off.

Some time after this their wives met. Semen's Arina greeted the neighbor's wife: she also said but a few words and went off. Once Semen met her and said:

"Why is it, young woman, that your husband doesn't talk?"

The young woman was silent for a moment, then said:

"And what is he to talk about with you? Everyone has his own affairs—Go your way in God's name."

However, before a month was over they became good friends. When Semen and Vasili met on the line, they would sit down on the bank, puff at their short pipes, and tell each other how they lived. Vasili was more often silent, but Semen would talk about his native village and his campaign.

"It's not a little trouble that I've had in my life," he said, "and God knows it hasn't been a long one. God has not granted me luck. Whatever luck the Lord gives, so it must be. That's how it is, brother, Vasili Stepanich."

Vasili Stepanich knocked the ashes out of his pipe on the rails and rose.

"It's not the luck the Lord gives that's against us," he said, "but men. There are no beasts of prey worse than men. Wolves won't eat wolves, but men will eat other men alive."

"No, brother, wolves do eat wolves, that you can't deny."

"The word came to my tongue and I said it. Just the same, no creatures are more cruel. One could live if it weren't for man's cruelty and greed. Everyone waits for a chance to catch you alive, to snatch your last bite and devour it."

Semen considered.

"I don't know, brother. Maybe it's so, but if it is, then God ordained it."

"If that's so," said Vasili, "then we have nothing more to say to each other. If we blame every injustice on God and only sit and suffer, then we are not men but cattle. That's what I say!"

He turned round and walked away without saying goodbye. Semen also arose.

"Neighbor, why do you swear at me?" he cried after him.

His neighbor did not turn round. Semen stood looking after him until he disappeared in the hollow at the turning. Then he went home and said to his wife: "Well, Arina, a nice neighbor we've got! He's not a man, he's a spiteful beast."

However, they did not quarrel. Soon they met again, and sat down and talked as before, always on the same subject.

"Well, my friend, if it weren't for those people, you and I would not be sitting in these watch-houses," said Vasili.

"What's wrong with these watch-houses? They're not so bad; you can live in them."

"You can live in them, you can live in them! That's what you say! You have lived long and won little, looked long and seen little. What sort of life has a poor man in a watch-house, or anywhere else? They'll eat you alive, the blood-suckers! They'll squeeze the last drop of blood out of you, and when you are old they'll throw you away, like dirt fit only for pigs.

What wages do you get?"

"Little enough, Vasili Stepanich; twelve rubles."

"And I get thirteen and a half. Now tell me why. According to the company's rules we all ought to get the same wages—fifteen rubles a month, and light and fuel. Who ordered that we, you and I, should get twelve rubles or thirteen and a half? Let me ask you that first. And then you say one can live! You understand it's not a question of a ruble and a half, or even of three rubles—even if they gave us the whole fifteen! I was at the station last month when the director passed, and saw him. He had all sorts of honors. There he was traveling in a private car. He came out and stood on the platform.—Well, I'll not stay here long. I'll follow my nose where it leads me."

"Where will you go, Stepanich? Let well enough be! Here you have a house and a bit of land, you are warm, and you have a wife who can work."

"A bit of land! You just take a look at my bit of land! There's not so much as a twig on it. Last spring I planted some cabbages. The roadmaster comes along. 'What's the meaning of this?' says he. 'Did you apply for permission? Out with them this instant. Not a trace of them must stay!' He was drunk. Another time he would have said nothing, but his head was spinning.—'Three rubles fine!'"

Vasili smoked his pipe in silence and then resumed: "A bit more, and I would have beaten him to death."

"Well, well, neighbor, you're hot-headed, you know."

"I'm not hot-headed. I only think and say the truth. He'll get it from me yet. I'll complain to the chief of the section."

He did complain.

The chief of the section came to inspect the line. Three days later some important personages from Petersburg were to pass. An inspection of the line was made, as everything had to be put in order before they arrived. Ballast was added where necessary and levelled up, the ties examined and tested with hammers, nuts tightened, posts painted, and at the crossings yellow sand was strewn. The old watch-woman turned out her old husband to pull up weeds. Semen worked hard all week and put everything in order. He mended his cap and cleaned it, and as for his metal disc, he scoured it with brickdust until it glistened. Vasili too worked hard.

The chief of the section arrived in a hand-car. Four workmen were laboring over the handles, the cog-wheels hummed, the machine went at the rate of twenty versts an hour, till the wheels groaned. It dashed up to Semen's watch-house. Semen ran out and made his report like a soldier. Everything was in order.

"How long have you been here?" asked the chief.

"Since the second of May, your honor."

"Very well. Thank you. Who is at number one hundred and sixty-four?"

The roadmaster, who was with him on the hand-car, said: "Vasili Spiridonov."

"Spiridonov, Spiridonov—? Ah, the same fellow who was reprimanded last year?"

"Yes, the same one."

"Ah, well, we shall see. Get on."

The workmen began to push the handles and the car started.

Semen looked after it and thought: "They'll have some good fun with my neighbor."

About two hours later he went his rounds. From the hollow he saw someone walking along the line, someone who appeared to have something white around his head. Semen looked more closely—it was Vasili. He had a stick in his hand and a little bundle over his shoulder, and his cheek was tied up in a handkerchief.

"Whither bound, neighbor?" cried Semen.

Vasili approached. His face was distorted and as white as chalk, and his eyes were wild. He attempted to speak, but his voice broke.

"I'm going to the town, to Moscow, to the Board!"

"To the Board—so, so! To complain, I suppose. Forget it, Vasili Stepanich, forget it!"

"No, brother, I'll not forget it. It's too late to forget. Look here, he struck me in the face—made it bleed. As long as I live I'll never forget it, I'll not leave it at this!"

Semen took his arm.

"Let it alone, Stepanich. I tell you the truth—you'll not mend matters."

"Mend matters? I know quite well I can't mend matters. It's right what you say about God's luck, I can't make it better for myself, but one must hold up for the truth, old fellow."

"Just tell me how it happened."

"How it happened! He looked over everything, got off the hand-car, came into the house. I knew he would inspect everything carefully, and I had put all in order, as it should be. He was just going when I made my complaint. He began to shout at me. 'This,' he said, 'is a government inspection, and you come with your complaints about a kitchen-garden! This,' he said, 'is a matter for Privy Councillors, and you come bothering me with your cabbages.' I couldn't help saying a word—not much, but it seemed to madden him, and he hit me one in the face—and I stood there, just as if it was right so! They drove away, and I recovered my senses, washed my face, and set out."

"What about the watch-house?"

"My wife is there. She'll look after it allright. The devil take them and their railroad!"

Vasili arose and prepared to start.

"Goodbye, Ivanich. I don't know whether I'll have justice done me."

"You don't intend to go on foot?"

"I'll ask at the station to go on a freight train. Tomorrow I'll be in Moscow."

The neighbors took leave of each other and Vasili set out. For a long time he was not seen again. His wife went his rounds and slept neither night nor day. She wore herself out waiting for her husband. On the third day the inspector's train went by; there were an engine, a luggage van, and two first-class coaches. Still Vasili was not there. On the fourth day Semen encountered his wife, her face swollen from tears and her eyes red.

"Has your husband come back?" he asked.

The woman only waved her hand, said nothing, and went her way.

Semen had learned as a boy how to make flutes out of willow branches. He would press the heart out of the wood, bore holes where necessary and arrange a mouth-piece at the end, and he contrived it all so well that one could play anything on it. He made a great many of these flutes in his spare time, sent them to town with the guard of a freight train whom he knew, and received two copecks each for them at the market. On the third day after the inspectors had gone by, he left his wife to meet the six o'clock evening train, and provided with a knife he went

into the wood to cut sticks for his pipes. He came to the end of his beat, at the point where the line turned sharply, clambered down an embankment, and went into the wood. About half a verst further on there was a large swamp, near which were to be found the best willow branches for making flutes. He cut a great bundle of them and turned to go home. He passed through the wood. The sun was already near setting. There was a dead silence; one could hear only the chirp of birds and the rustle of leaves underfoot. Semen proceeded further, and nearly to the railway line. He seemed to perceive a sound like the ring of metal on metal. Semen quickened his pace. There were no repairs being made on that part of the line. "What can this mean?" he thought. He reached the edge of the wood, and saw the line before him. A man was squatting on the line, busy at something. Semen went up to him quietly. The man stood up. He had a crowbar in his hands, and he stuck it under a rail, moving the rail a little to one side. It grew dark in front of Semen's eyes; he wanted to cry out but he could not. He saw it was Vasili, and ran toward him as fast as he could, but Vasili, with the crowbar and wrench, ran down the other side of the embankment.

"Vasili Stepanich! Brother! Come back, give me the crowbar! We'll put the rail in place—nobody will ever know. Come back, save your soul from sin!"

Vasili did not come back, but went on into the wood,

Semen stood before the dislocated rail. His sticks had fallen from his hands. The train that was due was not a freight, but a passenger train. He had no way of stopping it—no flags. He could not put the rail back in place with his bare hands, nor drive in the ties. He must run somewhere, he must most certainly run to his house for tools. God help him!

Semen ran towards his house panting. He ran and every moment he thought he would fall. He rushed out of the wood; it was only a few hundred yards to his house. The siren sounded at the mill—it was six o'clock. At two minutes after six the train was due. Good Lord, save the innocent souls! Semen saw it all—the engine would catch its left wheel in the dislocated rail, tremble, turn over, tear up the rails, splinter the sleepers! Right there was the curve of the line, the embankment goes straight down twenty-five yards, and there in the train in the third-class coach—women and little children crowded together. . . . There

they all sit, expecting nothing. Lord, tell me what to do!—No, there's no time to run to the house and back, no matter how fast you hurry . . .

Semen did not run to his house, but went back, running faster than ever. He ran almost unconsciously, not knowing what would happen the next moment. He reached the dislocated rail; there were his sticks lying on the ground in a heap. He stooped down, picked up a stick—why he did not know. He thought he heard the train coming. He heard a distant whistle. The rails began to tremble gently. He had no strength to run further; he halted about two hundred yards from the dangerous spot. At that moment light seemed to flood his mind. He removed his cap, took out of it a cotton handkerchief, pulled his knife out of his high boot, crossed himself—"God bless me!"

He plunged the knife into his left arm above the elbow. The blood gushed out, spurting in a hot stream. He wetted his handkerchief with it, smoothed it, spread it out, tied it to the stick, and held it aloft—his red flag.

There he stood waving his flag. Already he could see the train. The engineer did not notice him. The train would come near—and in a few hundred yards one cannot stop a heavy train!

His blood flowed out more strongly. Semen pressed the arm against him, hoping to quench the flow, but it would not stop—the wound was deep. He felt dizzy. Black flies whirled before his eyes—then there was darkness—the sound of bells in his ears. He could not see the train nor hear its noise—there was but one thought in his mind: "I shall not be able to stand—I shall fall—I shall drop the flag—the train will go over me—help me, oh God, help!"

His eyes grew dim, his mind became empty, he dropped the flag. But the bloody ensign did not fall to the ground—a hand caught it and held it high towards the approaching train. The engineer saw it, shut off the valve, reversed the engine, and stopped the train.

People rushed out of the cars, crowding together. They saw a man lying unconscious, covered with blood; near him stood another man with a bloody rag tied to a stick.

Vasili looked around him and his head sank.

"Seize me," he said; "I unscrewed the rail."



# NIKOLAI VASILIEVICH GOGOL

1809-1852

A novelist and a distinguished figure in Russian literature. During his school years he wrote several pieces, including a tragedy. Went to Petrograd to try a theatrical career, and failing in this became for a time a government clerk. His first literary work met with ridicule, but his "Evenings in a Farm Near Dikanka," published in 1830, was very successful and led to his appointment as professor at the University of Petrograd. Resigned his professorship to travel in Italy, where he spent most of his later life. Among his works are "Cossack Tales," "Old World Gentlefolks," and "Dead Souls," his masterpiece and one of the world's great novels.

## MEMOIRS OF A MADMAN

**O**CTOBER 3rd.—A strange occurrence has taken place to-day. I got up fairly late, and when Mawra brought me my clean boots, I asked her how late it was. When I heard it had long struck ten, I dressed as quickly as possible.

To tell the truth, I would rather not have gone to the office at all to-day, for I know beforehand that our department-chief will look as sour as vinegar. For some time past he has been in the habit of saying to me, "Look here, my friend; there is something wrong with your head. You often rush about as though you were possessed. Then you make such confused abstracts of the documents that the devil himself cannot make them out; you write the title without any capital letters, and add neither the date nor the docket-number." The long-legged scoundrel! He is certainly envious of me, because I sit in the director's work-room, and mend His Excellency's pens. In a word, I should not have gone to the office if I had not hoped to meet the accountant, and perhaps squeeze a little advance out of this skinflint.

A terrible man, this accountant! As for his advancing one's salary once in a way—you might sooner expect the skies to fall. You may beg and beseech him, and be on the very verge of ruin—this grey devil won't budge an inch. At the same time, his own cook at home, as all the world knows, boxes his ears.

I really don't see what good one gets by serving in our de-

partment. There are no plums there. In the fiscal and judicial offices it is quite different. There some ungainly fellow sits in a corner and writes and writes; he has such a shabby coat and such an ugly mug that one would like to spit on both of them. But you should see what a splendid country-house he has rented. He would not condescend to accept a gilt porcelain cup as a present. "You can give that to your family doctor," he would say. Nothing less than a pair of chestnut horses, a fine carriage, or a beaver-fur coat worth three hundred roubles would be good enough for him. And yet he seems so mild and quiet, and asks so amiably, "Please lend me your penknife; I wish to mend my pen." Nevertheless, he knows how to scarify a petitioner till he has hardly a whole stitch left on his body.

In our office it must be admitted everything is done in a proper and gentlemanly way; there is more cleanness and elegance than one will ever find in Government offices. The tables are mahogany, and everyone is addressed as "sir." And truly, were it not for this official propriety, I should long ago have sent in my resignation.

I put on my old cloak, and took my umbrella, as a light rain was falling. No one was to be seen on the streets except some women, who had flung their skirts over their heads. Here and there one saw a cabman or a shopman with his umbrella up. Of the higher classes one only saw an official here and there. One I saw at the street-crossing, and thought to myself, "Ah! my friend, you are not going to the office, but after that young lady who walks in front of you. You are just like the officers who run after every petticoat they see."

As I was thus following the train of my thoughts, I saw a carriage stop before a shop just as I was passing it. I recognized it at once; it was our director's carriage. "He has nothing to do in the shop," I said to myself; "it must be his daughter."

I pressed myself close against the wall. A lackey opened the carriage door, and, as I had expected, she fluttered like a bird out of it. How proudly she looked right and left; how she drew her eyebrows together, and shot lightnings from her eyes—good heavens! I am lost, helplessly lost!

But why must she come out in such abominable weather? And yet they say women are so mad on their finery!

She did not recognize me. I had wrapped myself as closely

as possible in my cloak. It was dirty and old-fashioned, and I would not have liked to have been seen by her wearing it. Now they wear cloaks with long collars, but mine has only a short double collar, and the cloth is of inferior quality.

Her little dog could not get into the shop, and remained outside. I know this dog; its name is "Meggy."

Before I had been standing there a minute, I heard a voice call, "Good day, Meggy!"

Who the deuce was that? I looked round and saw two ladies hurrying by under an umbrella—one old, the other fairly young. They had already passed me when I heard the same voice say again, "For shame, Meggy!"

What was that? I saw Meggy sniffing at a dog which ran behind the ladies. The deuce! I thought to myself, "I am not drunk? That happens pretty seldom."

"No, Fidel, you are wrong," I heard Meggy say quite distinctly. "I was—bow—wow!—I was—bow! wow! wow!—very ill."

What an extraordinary dog! I was, to tell the truth, quite amazed to hear it talk human language. But when I considered the matter well, I ceased to be astonished. In fact, such things have already happened in the world. It is said that in England a fish put its head out of water and said a word or two in such an extraordinary language that learned men have been puzzling over them for three years, and have not succeeded in interpreting them yet. I also read in the paper of two cows who entered a shop and asked for a pound of tea.

Meanwhile what Meggy went on to say seemed to me still more remarkable. She added, "I wrote to you lately, Fidel; perhaps Polkan did not bring you the letter."

Now I am willing to forfeit a whole month's salary if I ever heard of dogs writing before. This has certainly astonished me. For some little time past I hear and see things which no other man has heard and seen.

"I will," I thought, "follow that dog in order to get to the bottom of the matter." Accordingly, I opened my umbrella and went after the two ladies. They went down Bean Street, turned through Citizen Street and Carpenter Street, and finally halted on the Cuckoo Bridge before a large house. I know this house; it is Sverkoff's. What a monster he is! What sort of people

live there! How many cooks, how many bagmen! There are brother officials of mine also there packed on each other like herrings. And I have a friend there, a fine player on the cornet.

The ladies mounted to the fifth story. "Very good," thought I; "I will make a note of the number, in order to follow up the matter at the first opportunity."

*October 4th.*—To-day is Wednesday, and I was as usual in the office. I came early on purpose, sat down, and mended all the pens.

Our director must be a very clever man. The whole room is full of bookcases. I read the titles of some of the books; they were very learned, beyond the comprehension of people of my class, and all in French and German. I look at his face; see! how much dignity there is in his eyes. I never hear a single superfluous word from his mouth, except that when he hands over the documents, he asks "What sort of weather is it?"

No, he is not a man of our class; he is a real statesman. I have already noticed that I am a special favorite of his. If now his daughter also—ah! what folly—let me say no more about it!

I have read the *Northern Bee*. What foolish people the French are! By heavens! I should like to tackle them all, and give them a thrashing. I have also read a fine description of a ball given by a landowner of Kursk. The landowners of Kursk write a fine style.

Then I noticed that it was already half-past twelve, and the director had not yet left his bedroom. But about half-past one something happened which no pen can describe.

The door opened. I thought it was the director; I jumped up with my documents from the seat, and—then—she—herself—came into the room. Ye saints! how beautifully she was dressed. Her garments were whiter than a swan's plumage—oh how splendid! A sun, indeed, a real sun!

She greeted me and asked, "Has not my father come yet?"

Ah! what a voice. A canary bird! A real canary bird!

"Your Excellency," I wanted to exclaim, "don't have me executed, but if it must be done, then kill me rather with your own angelic hand." But, God knows why, I could not bring it out, so I only said, "No, he has not come yet."

She glanced at me, looked at the books, and let her handker-

chief fall. Instantly I started up, but slipped on the infernal polished floor, and nearly broke my nose. Still I succeeded in picking up the handkerchief. Ye heavenly choirs, what a handkerchief! So tender and soft, of the finest cambric. It had the scent of a general's rank!

She thanked me, and smiled so amiably that her sugar lips nearly melted. Then she left the room.

After I had sat there about an hour, a flunkey came in and said, "You can go home, Mr. Ivanovitch; the director has already gone out!"

I cannot stand these lackeys! They hang about the vestibules, and scarcely vouchsafe to greet one with a nod. Yes, sometimes it is even worse; once one of these rascals offered me his snuff-box without even getting up from his chair. "Don't you know then, you country-bumpkin, that I am an official and of aristocratic birth?"

This time, however, I took my hat and overcoat quietly; these people naturally never think of helping one on with it. I went home, lay a good while on the bed, and wrote some verses in my note:

"'Tis an hour since I saw thee,  
And it seems a whole long year;  
If I loathe my own existence,  
How can I live on, my dear?"

I think they are by Pushkin.

In the evening I wrapped myself in my cloak, hastened to the director's house, and waited there a long time to see if she would come out and get into the carriage. I only wanted to see her once, but she did not come.

*November 6th.*—Our chief clerk has gone mad. When I came to the office to-day he called me to his room and began as follows: "Look here, my friend, what wild ideas have got into your head?"

"How! What? None at all," I answered.

"Consider well. You are already past forty; it is quite time to be reasonable. What do you imagine? Do you think I don't know all your tricks? Are you trying to pay court to the director's daughter? Look at yourself and realize what you are! A nonentity, nothing else. I would not give a kopeck for you. Look well in the glass. How can you have such thoughts with such a caricature of a face?"

May the devil take him! Because his own face has a certain resemblance to a medicine-bottle, because he has a curly bush of hair on his head, and sometimes combs it upwards, and sometimes plasters it down in all kinds of queer ways, he thinks that he can do everything. I know well, I know why he is angry with me. He is envious; perhaps he has noticed the tokens of favor which have been graciously shown me. But why should I bother about him? A councillor! What sort of important animal is that? He wears a gold chain with his watch, buys himself boots at thirty roubles a pair; may the deuce take him! Am I a tailor's son or some other obscure cabbage? I am a nobleman! I can also work my way up. I am just forty-two—an age when a man's real career generally begins. Wait a bit, my friend! I too may get to a superior's rank; or perhaps, if God is gracious, even to a higher one. I shall make a name which will far out-strip yours. You think there are no able men except yourself? I only need to order a fashionable coat and wear a tie like yours, and you would be quite eclipsed.

But I have no money—that is the worst part of it!

*November 8th.*—I was at the theatre. "The Russian House-Fool" was performed. I laughed heartily. There was also a kind of musical comedy which contained amusing hits at barristers. The language was very broad; I wonder the censor passed it. In the comedy lines occur which accuse the merchants of cheating; their sons are said to lead immoral lives, and to behave very disrespectfully towards the nobility.

The critics also are criticised; they are said only to be able to find fault, so that authors have to beg the public for protection.

Our modern dramatists certainly write amusing things. I am very fond of the theatre. If I have only a kopeck in my pocket, I always go there. Most of my fellow-officials are uneducated boors, and never enter a theatre unless one throws free tickets at their head.

One actress sang divinely. I thought also of—but silence!

*November 9th.*—About eight o'clock I went to the office. The chief clerk pretended not to notice my arrival. I for my part also behaved as though he were not in existence. I read through and collated documents. About four o'clock I left. I passed by the director's house, but no one was to be seen. After dinner I lay for a good while on the bed.

*November 11th.*—Today I sat in the director's room, mended twenty-three pens for him, and for Her—for Her Excellence, his daughter, four more.

The director likes to see many pens lying on his table. What a head he must have! He continually wraps himself in silence, but I don't think the smallest trifle escapes his eye. I should like to know what he is generally thinking of, what is really going on in this brain; I should like to get acquainted with the whole manner of life of these gentlemen, and get a closer view of their cunning courtiers' arts, and all the activities of these circles. I have often thought of asking His Excellence about them; but—the deuce knows why!—every time my tongue failed me and I could get nothing out but my meteorological report.

I wish I could get a look into the spare-room whose door I so often see open. And a second small room behind the spare-room excites my curiosity. How splendidly it is fitted up; what a quantity of mirrors and choice china it contains! I should also like to cast a glance into those regions where Her Excellency, the daughter, wields the sceptre. I should like to see how all the scent-bottles and boxes are arranged in her boudoir, and the flowers which exhale so delicious a scent that one is half afraid to breathe. And her clothes lying about which are too ethereal to be called clothes—but silence!

To-day there came to me what seemed a heavenly inspiration. I remembered the conversation between the two dogs which I had overheard on the Nevski Prospect. "Very good," I thought; "now I see my way clear. I must get hold of the correspondence which these two silly dogs have carried on with each other. In it I shall probably find many things explained."

I had already once called Meggy to me and said to her, "Listen, Meggy! Now we are alone together; if you like, I will also shut the door so that no one can see us. Tell me now all that you know about your mistress. I swear to you that I will tell no one."

But the cunning dog drew in its tail, ruffled up its hair; and went quite quietly out of the door, as though it had heard nothing.

I had long been of the opinion that dogs are much cleverer than men. I also believed that they could talk, and that only a certain obstinacy kept them from doing so. They are especially

watchful animals, and nothing escapes their observation. Now, cost what it may, I will go to-morrow to Sverkoff's house in order to ask after Fidel, and if I have luck, to get hold of all the letters which Meggy has written to her.

*November 12th.*—To-day about two o'clock in the afternoon I started in order, by some means or other, to see Fidel and question her.

I cannot stand this smell of Sauerkraut which assails one's olfactory nerves from all the shops in Citizen Street. There also exhales such an odor from under each house door, that one must hold one's nose and pass by quickly. There ascends also so much smoke and soot from the artisans' shops that it is almost impossible to get through it.

When I had climbed up to the sixth story, and had rung the bell, a rather pretty girl with a freckled face came out. I recognized her as the companion of the old lady. She blushed a little and asked "What do you want?"

"I want to have a little conversation with your dog."

She was a simple-minded girl, as I saw at once. The dog came running and barking loudly. I wanted to take hold of it, but the abominable beast nearly caught hold of my nose with its teeth. But in a corner of the room I saw its sleeping-basket. Ah! that was what I wanted. I went to it, rummaged in the straw, and to my great satisfaction drew out a little packet of small pieces of paper. When the hideous little dog saw this, it first bit me in the calf of the leg, and then, as soon as it had become aware of my theft, it began to whimper and to fawn on me; but I said, "No, you little beast; good-bye!" and hastened away.

I believe the girl thought me mad; at any rate she was thoroughly alarmed.

When I reached my room I wished to get to work at once, and read through the letters by daylight, since I do not see well by candle-light; but the wretched Mawra had got the idea of sweeping the floor. These blockheads of Finnish women are always clean where there is no need to be.

I then went for a little walk and began to think over what had happened. Now at last I could get to the bottom of all facts, ideas and motives! These letters would explain everything. Dogs are clever fellows; they know all about politics, and I will



certainly find in the letters all I want, especially the character of the director and all his relationships. And through these letters I will get information about her who—but silence!

Towards evening I came home and lay for a good while on the bed.

*November 13th.*—Now let us see! The letter is fairly legible but the handwriting is somewhat doggish.

“DEAR FIDEL—I cannot get accustomed to your ordinary name, as if they could not have found a better one for you! Fidel! How tasteless! How ordinary! But this is not the time to discuss it. I am very glad that we thought of corresponding with each other.”

(The letter is quite correctly written. The punctuation and spelling are perfectly right. Even our head clerk does not write so simply and clearly, though he declares he has been at the University. Let us go on.)

“I think that it is one of the most refined joys of this world to interchange thoughts, feelings, and impressions.”

(H'm! This idea comes from some book which has been translated from German. I can't remember the title.)

“I speak from experience, although I have not gone farther into the world than just before our front door. Does not my life pass happily and comfortably? My mistress, whom her father calls Sophie, is quite in love with me.”

(Ah! Ah!—but better be silent!)

“Her father also often strokes me. I drink tea and coffee with cream. Yes, my dear, I must confess to you that I find no satisfaction in those large, gnawed-at bones which Polkan devours in the kitchen. Only the bones of wild fowl are good, and that only when the marrow has not been sucked out of them. They taste very nice with a little sauce, but there should be no green stuff in it. But I know nothing worse than the habit of giving dogs balls of bread kneaded up. Someone sits at table, kneads a bread-ball with dirty fingers, calls you and sticks it in your mouth. Good manners forbid your refusing it, and you eat it—with disgust it is true, but you eat it.”

(The deuce! What is this? What rubbish! As if she could find nothing more suitable to write about! I will see if there is anything more reasonable on the second page.)

“I am quite willing to inform you of everything that goes on

here. I have already mentioned the most important person in the house, whom Sophie calls 'Papa.' He is a very strange man."

(Ah! Here we are at last! Yes, I knew it; they have a politician's penetrating eye for all things. Let us see what she says about "Papa.")

"... a strange man. Generally he is silent; he only speaks seldom, but about a week ago he kept on repeating to himself, 'Shall I get it or not!' In one hand he took a sheet of paper; the other he stretched out as though to receive something, and repeated, 'Shall I get it or not?' Once he turned to me with the question, 'What do you think, Meggy?' I did not understand in the least what he meant, sniffed at his boots, and went away. A week later he came home with his face beaming. That morning he was visited by several officers in uniform who congratulated him. At the dinner-table he was in a better humor than I have ever seen him before."

(Ah! he is ambitious then! I must make a note of that.)

"Pardon, my dear, I hasten to conclude, etc., etc. To-morrow I will finish the letter."

• • • • •  
"Now, good morning; here I am again at your service. To-day my mistress Sophie . . ."

(Ah! we will see what she says about Sophie. Let us go on!)

"... was in an unusually excited state. She went to a ball, and I was glad that I could write to you in her absence. She likes going to balls, although she gets dreadfully irritated while dressing. I cannot understand, my dear, what is the pleasure in going to a ball. She comes home from the ball at six o'clock in the early morning, and to judge by her pale and emaciated face, she has had nothing to eat. I could, frankly speaking, not endure such an existence. If I could not get partridge with sauce, or the wing of a roast chicken, I don't know what I should do. Porridge with sauce is also tolerable, but I can get up no enthusiasm for carrots, turnips, and artichokes."

The style is very unequal! One sees at once that it has not been written by a man. The beginning is quite intelligent, but at the end the canine nature breaks out. I will read another letter; it is rather long and there is no date.

"Ah, my dear, how delightful is the arrival of spring! My

heart beats as though it expected something. There is a perpetual ringing in my ears, so that I often stand with my foot raised, for several minutes at a time, and listen towards the door. In confidence I will tell you that I have many admirers. I often sit on the window-sill and let them pass in review. Ah! if you knew what miscreations there are among them; one, a clumsy house-dog, with stupidity written on his face, walks the street with an important air and imagines that he is an extremely important person, and that the eyes of all the world are fastened on him. I don't pay him the least attention, and pretend not to see him at all.

"And what a hideous bulldog has taken up his post opposite my window! If he stood on his hind-legs, as the monster probably cannot, he would be taller by a head than my mistress' papa, who himself has a stately figure. This lout seems, moreover, to be very impudent. I growl at him, but he does not seem to mind that at all. If he at least would only wrinkle his forehead! Instead of that, he stretches out his tongue, droops his big ears, and stares in at the window—this rustic boor! But do you think, my dear, that my heart remains proof against all temptations? Alas no! If you had only seen that gentlemanly dog who crept through the fence of the neighboring house. 'Treasure' is his name. Ah, my dear, what a delightful snout he has!"

(To the deuce with the stuff! What rubbish it is! How can one blacken paper with such absurdities. Give me a man. I want to see a man! I need some food to nourish and refresh my mind, and get this silliness instead. I will turn the page to see if there is anything better on the other side.)

"Sophie sat at the table and sewed something. I looked out of the window and amused myself by watching the passers-by. Suddenly a flunkey entered and announced a visitor—'Mr. Teploff.'

"'Show him in!' said Sophie, and began to embrace me. 'Ah! Meggy, Meggy, do you know who that is? He is dark, and belongs to the Royal Household; and what eyes he has! Dark and brilliant as fire.'

"Sophie hastened into her room. A minute later a young gentleman with black whiskers entered. He went to the mirror, smoothed his hair, and looked round the room. I turned away

and sat down in my place.

"Sophie entered and returned his bow in a friendly manner.

"I pretended to observe nothing, and continued to look out of the window. But I leant my head a little on one side to hear what they were talking about. Ah, my dear! what silly things they discussed—how a lady executed the wrong figure in dancing; how a certain Boboff, with his expansive shirt-frill, had looked like a stork and nearly fallen down; how a certain Lidina imagined she had blue eyes when they were really green, etc.

"I do not know, my dear, what special charm she finds in her Mr. Teploff, and why she is so delighted with him."

(It seems to me myself that there is something wrong here. It is impossible that this Teploff should bewitch her. We will see further.)

"If this gentleman of the Household pleases her, then she must also be pleased, according to my view, with that official who sits in her papa's writing-room. Ah, my dear, if you know what a figure he is! A regular tortoise!"

(What official does she mean?)

"He has an extraordinary name. He always sits there and mends the pens. His hair looks like a truss of hay. Her papa always employs him instead of a servant."

(I believe this abominable little beast is referring to me. But what has my hair got to do with hay?)

"Sophie can never keep from laughing when she sees him."

You lie, cursed dog! What a scandalous tongue! As if I did not know that it is envy which prompts you, and that here there is treachery at work—yes, the treachery of the chief clerk. This man hates me implacably; he has plotted against me, he is always seeking to injure me. I'll look through one more letter; perhaps it will make the matter clearer.

"Fidel, my dear, pardon me that I have not written for so long. I was floating in a dream of delight. In truth, some author remarks, 'Love is a second life.' Besides, great changes are going on in the house. The young chamberlain is always here. Sophie is wildly in love with him. Her papa is quite contented. I heard from Gregor, who sweeps the floor, and is in the habit of talking to himself, that the marriage will soon be celebrated. Her papa will at any rate get his daughter married to a general, a colonel, or a chamberlain."

Deuce take it! I can read no more. It is all about chamberlains and generals. I should like myself to be a general—not in order to sue for her hand and all that—no, not at all; I should like to be a general merely in order to see people wriggling, squirming, and hatching plots before me.

And then I should like to tell them that they are both of them not worth spitting on. But it is vexatious! I tear the foolish dog's letters up in a thousand pieces.

*December 3rd.*—It is not possible that the marriage should take place; it is only idle gossip. What does it signify if he is a chamberlain! That is only a dignity, not a substantial thing which one can see or handle. His chamberlain's office will not procure him a third eye in his forehead. Neither is his nose made of gold; it is just like mine or anyone else's nose. He does not eat and cough, but smells and sneezes with it. I should like to get to the bottom of the mystery—whence do all these distinctions come? Why am I only a titular councillor?

Perhaps I am really a count or a general, and only appear to be a titular councillor. Perhaps I don't even know who and what I am. How many cases there are in history of a simple gentleman, or even a burgher or peasant, suddenly turning out to be a great lord or baron? Well, suppose that I appear suddenly in a general's uniform, on the right shoulder an epaulette, on the left an epaulette, and a blue sash across my breast, what sort of a tune would my beloved sing then? What would her papa, our director, say? Oh, he is ambitious! He is a freemason, certainly a freemason; however much he may conceal it. I have found it out. When he gives anyone his hand, he only reaches out two fingers. Well, could not I this minute be nominated a general or a superintendent? I should like to know why I am a titular councillor—why just that, and nothing more?

*December 5th.*—To-day I have been reading papers the whole morning. Very strange things are happening in Spain. I have not understood them all. It is said that the throne is vacant, the representatives of the people are in difficulties about finding an occupant, and riots are taking place.

All this appears to me very strange. How can the throne be vacant? It is said that it will be occupied by a woman. A woman cannot sit on a throne. That is impossible. Only a king can sit on a throne. They say that there is no king there, but that is

not possible. There cannot be a kingdom without a king. There must be a king, but he is hidden away somewhere. Perhaps he is actually on the spot, and only some domestic complications, or fears of the neighboring Powers, France and other countries, compel him to remain in concealment; there might also be other reasons.

*December 8th.*—I was nearly going to the office, but various considerations kept me from doing so. I keep on thinking about these Spanish affairs. How is it possible that a woman should reign? It would not be allowed, especially by England. In the rest of Europe the political situation is also critical; the Emperor of Austria——

These events, to tell the truth, have so shaken and shattered me, that I could really do nothing all day. Mawra told me that I was very absent-minded at table. In fact, in my absent-mindedness I threw two plates on the ground so that they broke in pieces.

After dinner I felt weak, and did not feel up to making abstracts of reports. I lay most of the time on my bed, and thought of the Spanish affairs.

*The year 2000: April 43rd.*—To-day is a day of splendid triumph. Spain has a king; he has been found, and I am he. I discovered it today; all of a sudden it came upon me like a flash of lightning.

I do not understand how I could imagine that I am a titular councillor. How could such a foolish idea enter my head? It was fortunate that it occurred to no one to shut me up in an asylum. Now it is all clear, and as plain as a pikestaff. Formerly—I don't know why—everything seemed veiled in a kind of mist. That is, I believe, because people think that the human brain is in the head. Nothing of the sort; it is carried by the wind from the Caspian Sea.

For the first time I told Mawra who I am. When she learned that the king of Spain stood before her, she struck her hands together over her head, and nearly died of alarm. The stupid thing had never seen the king of Spain before!

I comforted her, however, at once by assuring her that I was not angry with her for having hitherto cleaned my boots badly. Women are stupid things; one cannot interest them in lofty subjects. She was frightened because she thought all kings of

Spain were like Philip II. But I explained to her that there was a great difference between me and him. I did not go to the office. Why the deuce should I? No, my dear friends, you won't get me there again! I am not going to worry myself with your infernal documents any more.

*Marchember 86. Between day and night.*—To-day the office-messenger came and summoned me, as I had not been there for three weeks. I went just for the fun of the thing. The chief clerk thought I would bow humbly before him, and make excuses; but I looked at him quite indifferently, neither angrily nor mildly, and sat down quietly at my place as though I noticed no one. I looked at all this rabble of scribblers, and thought, "If you only knew who is sitting among you! Good heavens! what a to-do you would make. Even the chief clerk would bow himself to the earth before me as he does now before the director."

A pile of reports was laid before me, of which to make abstracts, but I did not touch them with one finger.

After a little time there was a commotion in the office, and there a report went round that the director was coming. Many of the clerks vied with each other to attract his notice; but I did not stir. As he came through our room, each one hastily buttoned up his coat; but I had no idea of doing anything of the sort. What is the director to me? Should I stand up before him? Never. What sort of a director is he? He is a bottle-stopper, and no director. A quite ordinary bottle-stopper—nothing more. I felt quite amused as they gave me a document to sign.

They thought I would simply put down my name—"So-and-so, Clerk." Why not? But at the top of the sheet, where the director generally writes his name, I inscribed "Ferdinand VIII." in bold characters. You should have seen what a reverential silence ensued. But I made a gesture with my hand, and said, "Gentlemen, no ceremony please!" Then I went out, and took my way straight to the director's house.

He was not at home. The flunkey wanted not to let me in, but I talked to him in such a way that he soon dropped his arms.

I went straight to Sophie's dressing-room. She sat before the mirror. When she saw me, she sprang up and took a step backwards; but I did not tell her that I was the king of Spain.

But I told her that a happiness awaited her, beyond her power to imagine; and that in spite of all our enemies' devices we should be united. That was all which I wished to say to her, and I went out. Oh, what cunning creatures these women are! Now I have found out what woman really is. Hitherto no one knew whom a woman really loves; I am the first to discover it—she loves the devil. Yes, joking apart, learned men write nonsense when they pronounce that she is this and that; she loves the devil—that is all. You see a woman looking through her lorgnette from a box in the front row. One thinks she is watching that stout gentleman who wears an order. Not a bit of it! She is watching the devil who stands behind his back. He has hidden himself there, and beckons to her with his finger. And she marries him—actually—she marries him!

That is all ambition, and the reason is that there is under the tongue a little blister in which there is a little worm of the size of a pin's head. And this is constructed by a barber in Bean Street; I don't remember his name at the moment, but so much is certain that, in conjunction with a midwife, he wants to spread Mohammedanism all over the world, and that in consequence of this a large number of people in France have already adopted the faith of Islam.

*No date. The day had no date.*—I went for a walk incognito on the Nevski Prospect. I avoided every appearance of being the king of Spain. I felt it below my dignity to let myself be recognized by the whole world, since I must first present myself at court. And I was also restrained by the fact that I have at present no Spanish national costume. If I could only get a cloak! I tried to have a consultation with a tailor, but these people are real asses! Moreover, they neglect their business, dabble in speculation, and have become loafers. I will have a cloak made out of my new official uniform which I have only worn twice. But to prevent this botcher of a tailor spoiling it, I will make it myself with closed doors, so that no one sees me. Since the cut must be altogether altered, I have used the scissors myself.

I don't remember the date. The devil knows what month it was. The cloak is quite ready. Mawra exclaimed aloud when I put it on. I will, however, not present myself at court yet; the Spanish deputation has not yet arrived. It would not be befitting



if I appeared without them. My appearance would be less imposing. From hour to hour I expect them.

*The 1st.*—The extraordinary long delay of the deputies in coming astonishes me. What can possibly keep them? Perhaps France has a hand in the matter; it is certainly hostilely inclined. I went to the postoffice to inquire whether the Spanish deputation had come. The postmaster is an extraordinary block-head who knows nothing. "No," he said to me, "there is no Spanish deputation here; but if you want to send them a letter, we will forward it at the fixed rate." The deuce! What do I want with a letter? Letters are nonsense. Letters are written by apothecaries. . . .

*Madrid, February 30th.*—So I am in Spain after all! It has happened so quickly that I could hardly take it in. The Spanish deputies came early this morning, and I got with them into the carriage. This unexpected promptness seemed to me strange. We drove so quickly that in half an hour we were at the Spanish frontier. Over all Europe now there are castiron roads, and the steamers go very fast. A wonderful country, this Spain!

As we entered the first room, I saw numerous persons with shorn heads. I guessed at once that they must be either grandees or soldiers, at least to judge by their shorn heads.

The Chancellor of the State, who led me by the hand, seemed to me to behave in a very strange way; he pushed me into a little room and said, "Stay here, and if you call yourself 'King Ferdinand' again, I will drive the wish to do so out of you."

I knew, however, that that was only a test, and I reasserted my conviction; on which the Chancellor gave me two such severe blows with a stick on the back, that I could have cried out with the pain. But I restrained myself, remembering that this was a usual ceremony of old-time chivalry when one was inducted into a high position, and in Spain the laws of chivalry prevail up to the present day. When I was alone, I determined to study State affairs; I discovered that Spain and China are one and the same country, and it is only through ignorance that people regard them as separate kingdoms. I advise everyone urgently to write down the word "Spain" on a sheet of paper; he will see that it is quite the same as China.

But I feel much annoyed by an event which is about to take place to-morrow; at seven o'clock the earth is going to sit on the

moon. This is foretold by the famous English chemist, Wellington. To tell the truth, I often felt uneasy when I thought of the excessive brittleness and fragility of the moon. The moon is generally repaired in Hamburg, and very imperfectly. It is done by a lame cooper, an obvious blockhead who has no idea how to do it. He took waxed thread and olive-oil—hence that pungent smell over all the earth which compels people to hold their noses. And this makes the moon so fragile that no men can live on it, but only noses. Therefore we cannot see our noses, because they are on the moon.

When I now pictured to myself how the earth, that massive body, would crush our noses to dust, if it sat on the moon, I became so uneasy, that I immediately put on my shoes and stockings and hastened into the council-hall to give the police orders to prevent the moon sitting on the earth.

The grandees with the shorn heads, whom I met in great numbers in the hall, were very intelligent people, and when I exclaimed, "Gentlemen! let us save the moon, for the earth is going to sit on it," they all set to work to fulfill my imperial wish, and many of them clambered up the wall in order to take the moon down. At that moment the Imperial Chancellor came in. As soon as he appeared, they all scattered, but I alone, as king, remained. To my astonishment, however, the Chancellor beat me with the stick and drove me to my room. So powerful are ancient customs in Spain!

*January in the same year, following after February*—I can never understand what kind of a country this Spain really is. The popular customs and rules of court etiquette are quite extraordinary. I do not understand them at all, at all. To-day my head was shorn, although I exclaimed as loudly as I could, that I did not want to be a monk. What happened afterwards, when they began to let cold water trickle on my head, I do not know. I have never experienced such hellish torments. I nearly went mad, and they had difficulty in holding me. The significance of this strange custom is entirely hidden from me. It is a very foolish and unreasonable one.

Nor can I understand the stupidity of the kings who have not done away with it before now. Judging by all the circumstances, it seems to me as though I had fallen into the hands of the Inquisition, and as though the man whom I took to be the Chancellor

was the Grand Inquisitor. But yet I cannot understand how the king could fall into the hands of the Inquisition. The affair may have been arranged by France—especially Polignac—he is a hound, that Polignac! He has sworn to compass my death, and now he is hunting me down. But I know, my friend, that you are only a tool of the English. They are clever fellows, and have a finger in every pie. All the world knows that France sneezes when England takes a pinch of snuff.

*The 25th.*—Today the Grand Inquisitor came into my room; when I heard his steps in the distance, I hid myself under a chair. When he did not see me, he began to call. At first he called "Poprishchin!" I made no answer. Then he called "Axanti Ivanovitch! Titular Councillor! Nobleman!" I still kept silence. "Ferdinand the Eighth, King of Spain!" I was on the point of putting out my head, but I thought, "No, brother, you shall not deceive me! You shall not pour water on my head again!"

But he had already seen me and drove me from under the chair with his stick. The cursed stick really hurts one. But the following discovery compensated me for all the pain, i. e., that every cock has his Spain under his feathers. The Grand Inquisitor went angrily away, and threatened me with some punishment or other. I felt only contempt for his powerless spite, for I know that he only works like a machine, like a tool of the English.

*34 March. February 349.*—No, I have no longer power to endure. O God! what are they going to do with me? They pour cold water on my head. They take no notice of me, and seem neither to see nor hear. Why do they torture me? What do they want from one so wretched as myself? What can I give them? I possess nothing. I cannot bear all their tortures; my head aches as though everything were turning round in a circle. Save me! Carry me away! Give me three steeds swift as the wind! Mount your seat, coachman, ring bells, gallop horses, and carry me straight out of this world. Farther, ever farther, till nothing more is to be seen!

Ah! the heaven bends over me already; a star glimmers in the distance; the forest with its dark trees in the moonlight rushes past; a bluish mist floats under my feet; music sounds in the cloud; on the one side is the sea, on the other, Italy; beyond I also see Russian peasants' houses. Is not my parents' house

there in the distance? Does not my mother sit by the window? O mother, mother, save your unhappy son! Let a tear fall on his aching head! See how they torture him! Press the poor orphan to your bosom! He has no rest in this world; they hunt him from place to place.

Mother, mother, have pity on your sick child! And do you know that the Bey of Algiers has a wart under his nose?

## MAXIM GORKY (ALEXEI MAXIMOVICH PESHKOV)

1868

Born in a little Russian village of poor parents who left him an orphan at nine. His hard-hearted grandfather apprenticed him to a shoemaker, from whom he soon fled to begin his long wanderings over the country. The story of his hardships and his struggle to learn reads like one of his own tales. Gradually he found expression in literature, and by 1905 was the most popular writer in Russia. In 1906 he visited the United States to raise money for a revolutionary movement. He took part in the revolution after the World War. With the accession of the bolsheviks he retired to Italy, where he now lives. Most of Gorky's tales are concerned with criminals, beggars, and outcasts, and have been translated into all European languages. The following story shows him in an unusual mood.

### THE KHAN AND HIS SON

THERE lived once in the Crimea a Khan, Mosolaymael-Asrab, and he had a son called Tolayk-Algalla.

With these words the blind Tartar beggar, seated with his back against the bright brown stem of an arbutus, began to relate one of those old legends of the peninsula, so rich in memories of the past. Round the story-teller a group of Tartars in bright-colored *khalats* and gold-embroidered caps were seated on fragments of stone that time had detached from the palace of some ancient Khan. It was evening, and the sun was slowly sinking into the sea; its red rays pierced the masses of dark green foliage surrounding the ruins and fell in bright spots on the moss-grown stones and the trails of clinging green ivy. The wind sang in the branches of the old plane-trees, and their leaves rustled as if invisible streams of water were flowing through the air. The blind beggar's voice was weak and shaky, and his stony face expressed nothing in its wrinkles but repose. The words he knew by heart flowed one after the other and presented to his hearers a picture of the past days, rich in strength of feeling.

The Khan was old (said the blind man), but he had many women in his harem. They loved the old man because he still had his meed of strength and fire and his caresses were tender

and burning, and women will always love him who can caress with strength, even if he is grey, even if his face is wrinkled. Beauty lies in strength, and not in a soft skin and rosy cheeks.

They all loved the Khan, but he himself favored a Cossack prisoner from the Dnieper steppes and always loved her more passionately than the other women of his harem, his large harem of three hundred women of all countries. Each was as beautiful as the spring flowers, and they all lived comfortably. The Khan ordered many sweet and tasty viands for them, and suffered them to dance and play when they liked.

He often called his Cossack girl to him in the tower, where you could see the sea, and where he had prepared for her all that a woman can need to make her life joyful: sweetmeats and all sorts of rich fabrics, gold and stones of many colors, music and rare birds from distant lands, and the burning caresses of the enamoured Khan. In this tower he amused himself with her for whole days, resting from the toil of his life in the knowledge that his son Algalla would not lower the renown of the Khanate when like a wolf he raided the Russian steppes, whence he always returned with rich spoils, with new women, with new glory, leaving behind him terror and ashes, corpses and blood.

Once Algalla returned from a raid into Russia and great festivities were held in his honor. All the lords of the peninsula came to them; there were games and feastings, and they shot arrows from their bows into the eyes of the prisoners, trying who had the greatest strength in the arm; and again they drank and extolled the bravery of Algalla, the terror of his enemies, the support of the Khanate. The old Khan was much pleased at his son's glory. It was good for him, an old man, to know that when he died, the Khanate would be in strong hands.

It was good for him to know this, and wishing to show his son the strength of his love, he spoke to him before all the lords and chieftains who were there at the feast. Holding his goblet in his hand he said: "My own dear son, Algalla! Glory to Allah! and glory be to the name of his prophet."

They all sang in a chorus of powerful voices a hymn to the glory of the name of the prophet, and then the Khan said: "Allah is great! Even in my lifetime he has renewed my youth in my brave son; I see with my old eyes that when the sun will be shut off from them, and when the worms will gnaw at my heart, I

shall live again in my son. Allah is great and Mahomet is his true prophet! I have a good son; his arm is strong, his heart is brave, his mind is clear. What do you wish your father's hands to give you, Algalla? Speak and I will give you all that you desire."

The old Khan's voice had hardly died away when Tolayk-Algalla rose with flashing eyes, black as the sea at night and burning as the eyes of a mountain eagle.

"O monarch and father," he said, "give me the Russian prisoner."

The Khan was silent, silent only as long as was necessary to quell the shudder in his heart, and after his silence he said in a loud, firm voice: "Take her! When the feast is over you may take her . . ."

The daring Algalla flushed with delight, his eagle eyes sparkled with great joy; he stood up to his full height, and said to the Khan his father: "I know what you give me, sovereign and father—I know it. I am your slave—your son. Take my blood, a drop each hour—twenty deaths will I die for you!"

"I want nothing," said the Khan, and his grey head, crowned with the glory of long years and many great deeds, sank on his breast.

Soon the feast was over, and they both went out of the palace to the harem, walking side by side in silence.

The night was dark; neither the moon nor the stars could be seen, and clouds covered the sky like a thick curtain.

For a long time they went on in silence, and at last Khan-el-Asrab spoke:

"Day by day my life is ebbing—my old heart beats ever slower and slower, there is always less fire in my breast. The light and warmth of my life were that Cossack girl's ardent caresses. Tell me, Tolayk, tell me—is she really necessary for you? Take a hundred of my wives—take them all, instead of her."

Tolayk-Algalla signed and was silent.

"How many days have I left me? I have few days more on the earth. She is the last joy of my life—this Russian girl. She knows me, she loves me; who will love me when she is not there—me, an old man? Who? Not one of them all, not one, Algalla!"

Algalla was silent.

"How shall I live knowing that you are embracing her, that

she is kissing you? For a woman we are not father and son, Tolayk; for a woman we are all men, my son! It were better if all the old wounds on my body had opened, Tolayk, that my blood had flowed out—it were better if I did not survive this night, my son!"

His son remained silent. They stopped at the door of the harem, and silently, their heads sunk on their breasts, they stood long before it. Darkness was around them, clouds chased across the sky, the wind shook the trees and seemed to be singing to them.

"Father, I have long loved her," said Algalla quietly.

"I know it, and I know that she does not love you," said the Khan.

"My heart is torn when I think of her!"

"What is my old heart full of now?"

And again they were silent. Algalla sighed.

"I see what the wise mollah told me is true. Woman is always harmful to men. If she is beautiful, she arouses in others the desire to possess her, and her husband is given over to the pangs of jealousy. If she is ugly, her husband is envious of others, and suffers from envy. If she is neither pretty nor ugly, the man imagines she is beautiful, and understanding that he has made a mistake again suffers through her—through a woman."

"Wisdom is no medicine for the pains of the heart," said the Khan.

"Father, we must pity each other."

The Khan raised his head and looked sorrowfully at his son.

"Let us kill her," said Tolayk.

The Khan thought a moment; then he quietly murmured: "You love yourself better than her and me."

"Yes, and you too."

Again they were silent.

"Yes, and I too," said the Khan sadly. Grief had made him a child.

"Well, shall we kill her?"

"I cannot give her to you, I cannot!" said the Khan.

"And I can suffer no longer; tear out my heart, or give her to me."

The Khan was silent.

"Or let us throw her into the sea from the cliffs."



"Let us throw her into the sea from the cliffs," the Khan repeated the words like an echo of his son's voice.

Then they went into the harem, where already she was asleep on the floor on her sumptuous carpet. They stopped before her and looked—they looked long at her. Tears flowed from the old Khan's eyes and ran down his silver beard, where they shone like pearls, and his son stood there with flashing eyes, grinding his teeth to suppress his passion as he aroused the Cossack girl. She awoke: from her face, rosy and delicate as the dawn, her eyes opened out like cornflowers. She did not see Algalla, and stretched out her red lips to the Khan.

"Kiss me, my eagle!"

"Get up—you must come with us," the Khan said gently.

Then she saw Algalla, and the tears in her eagle's eyes; she was quick to perceive, and so understood all.

"I will come," she said, "I will come. Neither for the one nor for the other?—is that how you have decided? Strong hearts had to decide thus! I will come."

Then all three went towards the sea in silence. They went by narrow paths, and the wind howled loudly.

The girl was frail, and soon became tired, but she was proud and did not want to tell them.

When the Khan's son noticed that she was staying behind them, he said to her, "Are you afraid?"

Her eyes sparkled at him and she showed him her bleeding feet.

"Let me carry you," said Algalla, holding out his arms to her. But she put her arms around the neck of her old eagle. The Khan lifted her up like a feather and carried her, while she, resting in his arms, bent the branches away from his face for fear they might hurt his eyes. Long they walked on, and at last they heard the sound of the sea in the distance. Then Tolayk, who was following them along the footpath, said to his father, "Let me go in front, or I shall desire to stab you in the neck with my dagger."

"Pass on. Allah will fulfil your desire or forgive it—His will be done. I, your father, forgive you. I know what it is to love."

At last the sea lay before them. There, far below them was space, black and boundless. Dully the waves sang at the foot of the rocks; it was dark down there, and cold, and terrible.

"Farewell," said the Khan, kissing the girl.

"Farewell," said Algalla, bowing to her.

She looked down where the waves were singing and shrank back, pressing her hands to her breast.

"Throw me down!" she said to them.

Algalla stretched out his arms to her and groaned, but the Khan took her in his arms, pressed her tightly to his breast, and kissed her; then, lifting her above his head, he threw her over the cliff.

Below the waves dashed and sang; so loud were they that neither of them heard when she reached the water, not a cry nor sound did they hear. The Khan sank on the rocks and silently looked down into the darkness and distance, where the sea was merged in the clouds, whence swept the dull sound of the splashing waves and the wind came flying past and blew about his grey beard. Tolayk stood by him, hiding his face in his hands, motionless and speechless as a stone. Time passed and the clouds sped over the sky one after another, chased by the wind. Dark and heavy they were, like the thoughts of the old Khan who lay above the seat at the top of the high cliffs.

"Father, let us go," said Tolayk.

"Wait," whispered the Khan, as if listening. Again time sped by, the waves splashed below, and the wind flew over the rocks and howled in the trees.

"Father, let us go."

"Wait a little longer."

Many times did Tolayk-Algalla say: "Father, let us go." But the Khan would not move from the place where he had lost the joy of his remaining days.

But everything has an end! At last he rose, vigorous and proud; he rose, frowned, and said in a hollow voice, "Let us go."

They went, but soon the Khan stopped.

"But why am I going, Tolayk, and where?" he asked his son. "Why should I live now, when all my life was in her? I am old, no one will love me again, and if nobody loves you it is senseless to live in the world."

"You have glory and riches, father."

"Give me one of her kisses, and you may have all those as a reward. They are dead, it is only the love of woman that lives. If he has not that love, man has not life—he is a beggar and

his days are pitiable. Farewell, my son; may Allah's blessing rest on your head, and remain with you for all the days and nights of your life!" And the Khan turned his face to the sea.

"Father," cried Tolayk, "father!"—and he could say no more, for you can say nothing to a man on whom death smiles, you can say nothing which would restore the love of life to his soul.

"Let me go . . ."

"Allah . . ."

"He knows . . ."

With rapid steps the Khan went to the edge of the cliff and threw himself down. His son did not prevent him—he could not, for there was not time. Again nothing was heard from the sea, not a cry, not the noise of the Khan's fall. Only the waves splashed below and the wind droned wild songs.

Long did Tolayk-Algalla look down the cliff; at last he said aloud: "Give me too such a strong heart, O Allah!"

Then he went into the darkness of night. . . .

Thus perished Khan Mosolayma-Asrab, and Khan Tolayk-Algalla reigned in the Crimea.

## MIKHAIL YUR'VICH LERMONTOV

1814-1841

One of the greatest of Russian poets, and a short story writer of note. Born in Moscow, of Scotch ancestry. Spent much of his early life in the Caucasus, the scene of many of his stories. Studied at the University of Moscow, and there made his first literary attempts. Became an officer of the Hussars and a dashing figure in the best society in Petrograd. In 1837 was exiled for writing a scathing poem on the death of Pushkin. Killed in a duel. His contribution to Russian literature is a rich one. His most important story, "The Hero of Our Times," shows Byron's influence.

### *A Turkish Tale*

#### ASHIK-KERIB

ONCE upon a time there lived in the city of Tiflis a wealthy Turk. Allah had bestowed on him much gold, but dearer to him than gold was his only daughter, Magul-Megeri. The stars in the sky are beautiful, but beyond the stars dwell the angels, and they are more beautiful still; so was Magul-Megeri more beautiful than all the girls in Tiflis.

In Tiflis there lived also a poor man, Ashik-Kerib. The prophet had given him only a great heart and the gift of song. He would go to weddings and festivals and entertain the rich and happy by playing on his guitar and chanting the praises of the old heroes of Turkistan. One day, at a wedding, he saw Magul-Megeri, and they fell in love with each other. But there was faint hope of winning her as his wife for poor Ashik-Kerib, and he became sad as the winter sky.

One day he lay down in a garden, in the shadow of the vines, and fell asleep. Soon Magul-Megeri chanced to pass by there with her girl friends, and one of them, when she saw the sleeping guitar-player, lagged behind, and going up to him sang: "Why do you lie sleeping under the vines, madman? Your gazelle is passing by." He started up, and the girl fluttered away like a bird. Magul-Megeri had heard her song and was annoyed with her. "If only you knew to whom I sang," answered the girl, "you would thank me. It was your Ashik-Kerib." "Take me to him!" cried Magul-Megeri. And they went.

When she saw his sad face Magul-Megeri asked him why he was unhappy and tried to comfort him. "How can I but grieve?" Ashik-Kerib told her. "I love you, and you can never be mine." "Ask my father for my hand," she said, "and my father will make us a wedding with his gold and will give me so much that there will be enough for both of us." "Very well," he said, "let us suppose that Aïak-Aga will deny nothing to his daughter, but who knows if afterward you will not reproach me for owning nothing and for owing everything to you? No, dear Magul-Megeri, I have pledged my soul and made a vow to journey round the world for seven years, and either acquire great wealth or perish miserably in the wilderness. If you promise to wait for me, after that time you shall be mine." She promised, but added that if he failed to return by the appointed day she would marry Kurshud-Bek, who had long been paying her court.

Ashik-Kerib went to his mother and asked her blessing for his wanderings. Then he kissed his little sister, slung a sack across his shoulders, and leaning on a pilgrim's staff, quitted the city of Tiflis. Soon a rider caught up to him. Ashik-Kerib looked—it was Kurshud-Bek. "Good fortune to you on your journey!" cried the Bek. "Wherever you may go, pilgrim, I shall be your companion." Ashik was not pleased to have such a companion, but there was no way out of it. For a long time they traveled side by side. Then they reached a river without bridge or ford. "You swim first," said Kurshud-Bek, "I will follow you." So Ashik stripped off his outer clothes and swam across. When he got to the other bank he looked back. Oh, ill fortune, Almighty Allah! Kurshud-Bek had taken his clothes and gone back to Tiflis: only a cloud of dust remained, coiling after him like a snake over the flat fields. When he reached Tiflis again, Kurshud-Bek took the garments to Ashik-Kerib's old mother, saying: "Your son has been drowned in a deep river; here are his clothes." With unutterable grief the poor mother fell upon the clothes of her son and wept bitter tears over them. Then she carried them to her son's betrothed and said: "My son is drowned; Kurshud-Bek has brought me his clothes. You are free." Magul-Megeri smiled and answered: "Do not believe it, it's all an invention of Kurshud-Bek's. No man shall become my husband before seven years have passed."

Then she took her guitar from the wall and calmly began to sing the favorite song of Ashik-Kerib.

Meanwhile the wanderer, almost naked and without shoes, reached a village. The kind people gave him food and clothes, and for thanks he sang marvelous songs to them. In this fashion he made his way from village to village, from town to town, and his fame spread everywhere. He arrived at last at Khalaf. As was his custom he went into a coffee-house, asked for a guitar and began to sing. At that time there lived in Khalaf a pasha who was a great patron of singers. Many had been brought to him, but none had pleased him. His servants were weary of searching for singers in every corner of the great city. But chancing to pass the coffee-house at this time they heard a wonderful voice. They rushed in. "Come with us to the great pasha," they cried, "or you will answer for it with your head." "I am a free man, a wanderer from the city of Tiflis," answered Ashik-Kerib. "When I wish to go, I go; when I don't wish to go, I don't. I sing when I want to. Your pasha is not my master." Despite all his words, however, they seized him and brought him before the pasha. "Sing," commanded the pasha; and he sang. His song was of his dear Magul-Megeri, and it pleased the proud pasha so much that he commanded poor Ashik-Kerib to remain with him. Gold and jewels were showered upon him, and he was dressed in shining garments. Ashik-Kerib lived very happily and gaily and grew very rich.

Perhaps he had forgotten his Magul-Megeri. At any rate, the seven years were nearly over. The last year was nearly ended, and he made no preparations to leave. Lovely Magul-Megeri began to despair. At that time a merchant was getting ready to set out from Tiflis with a caravan of forty camels and eighty slaves. She called the merchant to her, and gave him a golden dish. "Take this dish," she said, "and whatever town you come to show this dish in your shop, and proclaim everywhere that whoever claims to be the owner of my dish and can prove his claim, shall receive it, and besides its weight in gold." The merchant departed, and in every city he came to did her bidding, but none claimed the golden dish. He had sold almost all his wares; with the remainder he arrived at Khalaf. Everywhere he proclaimed what Magul-Megeri had commanded him to say. Ashik-Kerib heard of it, and running to the caravansera

he saw the dish in the shop of the merchant from Tiflis. "This is my dish," he exclaimed, seizing it with both his hands. "It certainly is yours," said the merchant. "I recognize you, Ashik-Kerib. Make haste to Tiflis; your Magul-Megeri bade me tell you that the seven years have almost passed, and that if on the appointed day you do not come, she will wed another."

In despair Ashik-Kerib clasped his head in his hands. But three days were wanting till the fatal hour. Nevertheless he mounted his horse, took a bag of gold coins, and rode off. He did not spare his horse. At last the exhausted animal fell down and breathed out his life on the Erzizian hills, which lie between Erzizian and Ezerum. What should he do? From Erzizian to Tiflis was a whole month's journey, and only two days were left him. "Almighty Allah!" he cried, "if you do not help me there is nothing left on this earth for me to do." And he was on the point of hurling himself from the top of a high cliff. Suddenly he perceived below him a horseman on a white steed, and he heard a loud voice: "Youth, what are you about to do?" "I want to die," said Ashik. "If you want to die, come down and I will kill you." Ashik contrived somehow to climb down the steep rocks. "Follow me," said the horseman in a loud voice. "How can I follow you? Your horse flies like the wind and I am burdened with my wallet." "True enough! Hang your wallet on my saddle, and follow me." But Ashik-Kerib, however fast he ran, was soon left behind. "Why do you lag behind?" asked the horseman. "How can I help it? Your horse is faster than thought, and I am exhausted." "Well, jump up behind me, and tell me the truth: where do you want to go?" "If I could only reach Erzerum today!" said Ashik-Kerib. "Shut your eyes then!" Ashik shut them. "Now open them!" Ashik looked. Before him glistened the white walls and shining minarets of Erzerum. "Grant me pardon, Aga," said Ashik. "I have made a mistake. I intended to say that I must go to Kars." "It is as I suspected," answered the horseman. "I warned you that you must tell me the truth. Shut your eyes again! Now open them!" Ashik could scarcely credit his sight when he beheld Kars before him. He fell on his knees and said: "I am blameworthy, Aga, your servant Ashik-Kerib is twice to blame. But you know yourself that when a man has determined to lie in the morning he must needs lie all day. It is to Tiflis that I must really go."

"Ah, you are not to be trusted," said the rider angrily. "But what can I do? I forgive you. Shut your eyes! Now open them again!" he said after a moment. Ashik cried aloud with joy; they were at the gates of Tiflis. Thanking the horseman with all his heart he took his wallet from the saddle. Then he said: "Aga, your beneficence is in truth great, but I pray you to do even more for me: if I relate that I have journeyed from Erzigan to Tiflis in a single day, no one will believe me—give me a proof." "Stoop down," said the rider, smiling, "and take from under the horse's hoof a clod of earth and put it in your besom. If they do not believe your true story, bid them bring to you a blind woman who has been blind for seven years, and smear her eyes with the clod, and she will see." Ashik took the lump of earth from under the horse's hoof, but ere he could lift his head both horse and rider had vanished. Then he knew in his soul that his benefactor had been no other than Khaderiliaz, the great Saint George.

It was late at night before Ashik-Kerib succeeded in finding his home. He knocked at the door with a hand that trembled and called: "Mother, mother, open the door! I am God's guest, and I am cold and hungry. I pray you, for the sake of your wandering son, let me in!" The weak voice of the old woman replied: "For night travellers there are the houses of the rich and strong. There are weddings in the town—go thither, and there you can spend the night in pleasure." "Mother," he answered, "I know nobody here, and so I repeat my request: for the sake of your wandering son let me in." Then his sister said to her mother: "I will rise and open the door for him." "You worthless creature," answered the old woman, "you are glad to receive young men and entertain them, for it is now seven years since I went blind from weeping so many tears." But her laughter paid no attention to her reproaches, arose, opened the door, and let Ashik-Kerib in. He uttered the customary words of greeting, seated himself, and with secret agitation began to look around. Hanging on the walls in a dust-covered case he saw his sweet-sounding guitar, and he asked his mother: "What is that hanging on your wall?" "You are a very inquisitive guest. Let it be enough for you that you receive a piece of bread and that tomorrow you will be wished godspeed on your way." "I have already told you that you are my mother, and that this



is my sister," he said. "And therefore, I beg you to tell me what is that hanging on your wall." "It's a guitar, a guitar," said the old woman angrily, not believing him. "And what is the meaning of that word?" "A guitar is a thing you play on and sing songs to." Then Ashik-Kerib asked her to permit his sister to take it down and show it to him. "That cannot be," said the old woman. "That guitar belonged to my unhappy son. It is now seven years that it has hung on the wall, untouched by a living hand." But his sister rose, took the guitar from the wall, and gave it to him. Then he raised his eyes to heaven and uttered a prayer: "Oh Almighty Allah! If I am to attain the end I desire, then my seven-stringed guitar will be as well attuned as it was on the day when last I played upon it."

He plucked the brass strings and they responded harmoniously. Then he began to sing: "I am a poor wanderer and my words are poor, yet know me, oh mother! know your wanderer!" Then his mother began to weep aloud and asked him: "What is your name?" "I am called Rashid, the simple-minded," he answered. "Rashid," she said, "you have torn my heart to pieces with your words. This night I dreamed that the hairs of my head grew white. It is now seven years since my tears made me blind. Tell me, you who possess his voice, when will my son return?" And twice she repeated her question in tears. It was in vain that he told her he was her son; she would not believe him. After a while he said: "Mother, let me take the guitar and go. I have heard that there is a wedding hard by—my sister will show me the way. I will play and sing, and whatever I receive I will bring nere and share with you." "I will not allow it," said, the old woman. "Never since my son went away has his guitar left my house." He swore he would not injure a single string. "And if even a string should break, I will answer for it with all I possess," he continued. The old woman felt of his wallet, and perceiving that it was full of coins she allowed him to go. His sister led him to a house where they were celebrating a marriage, and she stopped near the door to see what would happen.

Magul-Megeri lived in this house, and that night she was to become the wife of Kurshud-Bek. Kurshud-Bek was feasting with his relations and friends, while Magul-Megeri reclined with her girl friends behind a rich tapestry. In one hand she held

a cup of poison, in the other a sharp dagger, and she swore that she would rather die than lay her head on Kurshud-Bek's couch. Through the curtain she heard that a stranger had arrived, who said: "Greetings, you who are feasting and amusing yourselves here. Permit me, a poor wanderer, to sit down among you, and in return I shall sing you a song." "Why not?" said Kurshud-Bek. "Singers and dancers shall be admitted here, for this is a wedding feast. Therefore sing us something, wanderer, and I will give you a handful of gold when you leave."

Then Kurshud-Bek continued: "What is your name?" "Shindigerursez" (that is, You shall soon know), answered Ashik. "What sort of a name is that?" asked the other laughing. "That is the first time I have heard such a name." "When my mother was bearing me and was in travail," answered Ashik, "the neighbors came to the door and asked: 'Has God sent her a son or a daughter.' They were told: 'You shall soon know.' And that is why when I was born this name was given me." Then he took his guitar and began to sing:

"In the city of Khalaf I drank wine of Mezzehria, but Allah gave me wings and I flew here in three days."

The brother of Kurshud-Bek, a feeble-minded man, drew his dagger at that and cried: "You lie! How can anyone travel to Tiflis from Khalaf in three days?"

"Why do you want to kill me?" asked Ashik. "It is the wont of singers to gather in one place from all the corners of the earth. I ask nothing of you—believe me or not, as you like."

"Let him continue," said the bridegroom. And Ashik-Kerib resumed his song:

"My morning prayers I recited in the valley of Erzigan. At midday I prayed in Erzerum. At the setting of the sun I prayed in Kars, and at night in Tiflis. Allah gave me wings, and hither I flew. May Allah grant that I become a sacrifice to the white horse; he ran as quickly as a dancer on a tight-rope; he leaped from the mountains to the ravines, from the ravines to the mountains. Allah gave Ashik wings, and he has flown here in time for the wedding of Magul-Megeri."

Then Magul-Megeri recognized his voice, and she flung away the dagger and the poison. "So that's how you keep your word," her girl friends said mockingly. "Tonight you intend to be the bride of Kurshud-Bek." "You have not recognized the voice

that is dear to me," she answered, and taking a pair of scissors she cut through the curtain. When she looked and knew her dear Ashik-Kerib, she cried out and flung her arms round his neck, and together they fell down insensible. Kurshud-Bek's brother threw himself upon them with his dagger, intending to kill them both, but Kurshud stopped him and said: "Calm yourself, and know that a man cannot escape what is written at birth on his forehead."

When she recovered her senses, Magul-Megeri blushed with shame, hid her face in her hands and ran behind the tapestry.

"Now I know that you are really Ashik-Kerib," said the bridegroom. "But tell us how you were enabled to travel so great a distance in so short a time." "To prove the truth of my words," said Ashik, "my sabre will cut through a stone, and if I lie may my neck become thinner than a thread. But better still, bring me a blind woman who has not seen Allah's light for seven years, and I will restore her sight." Ashik-Kerib's sister who was standing behind the door, heard these words and running to her mother, she cried: "Mother, he is in truth my brother, your son Ashik-Kerib," and she took the old woman by the hand and conducted her to the feast. Then Ashik took the clod of earth from his bosom, dissolved it in water, and smeared it on his mother's eyes, saying: "Know, all ye people, the greatness of George the Saint, the mighty Khaderiliaz." And his mother recovered her sight. After that none dared question the truth of his words, and Kurshud-Bek resigned to him without a word the beautiful Magul-Megeri.

Then in his joy Ashik-Kerib said to Kurshud-Bek: "Listen, Kurshud-Bek; I will console you. My sister is no whit less lovely than your former bride. I am rich, she shall have no less silver and jewels. Therefore take her to yourself and be as happy with her as I am with my dear Magul-Megeri."

## ALEXANDER PUSHKIN

1799-1837

The first great figure in Russian literature. Through his writings he moulded the Russian language and freed Russian literature from the French tradition, placing it on a national basis. Born at Moscow, educated at the Lyceum at Tsarskoë-Selo, and entered the government service. His liberal opinions got him into frequent trouble. Under Nicholas I. he was imperial historiographer. He died of a wound received in a duel. He wrote many poems and short stories, "Eugene Onegin," a metrical tale showing Byron's influence, and "Boris Goudonov," a tragedy.

### THE COFFIN-MAKER

THE last of the effects of the coffin-maker, Adrian Prokhoroff, were placed upon the hearse, and a couple of sorry-looking jades dragged themselves along for the fourth time from Bas-mannaia to Nikitskaia, whither the coffin-maker was removing with all his household. After locking up the shop, he posted upon the door a placard announcing that the house was to be let or sold, and then made his way on foot to his new abode. On approaching the little yellow house, which had so long captivated his imagination, and which at last he had bought for a considerable sum, the old coffin-maker was astonished to find that his heart did not rejoice. When he crossed the unfamiliar threshold and found his new home in the greatest confusion, he sighed for his old hovel, where for eighteen years the strictest order had prevailed. He began to scold his two daughters and the servant for their slowness, and then set to work to help them himself. Order was soon established; the ark with sacred images, the cupboard with the crockery, the table, the sofa, and the bed occupied the corners reserved for them in the back room; in the kitchen and parlor were placed the articles comprising the stock-in-trade of the master—coffins of all colors and of all sizes, together with cupboards containing mourning hats, cloaks and torches.

Over the door was placed a sign representing a fat Cupid with an inverted torch in his hand and bearing this inscription: "Plain and colored coffins sold and lined here; coffins also let out on hire, and old ones repaired."

The girls retired to their bedroom; Adrian made a tour of inspection of his quarters, and then sat down by the window and ordered the tea-urn to be prepared.

The enlightened reader knows that Shakespeare and Walter Scott have both represented their grave-diggers as merry and facetious individuals, in order that the contrast might more forcibly strike our imagination. Out of respect for the truth, we cannot follow their example, and we are compelled to confess that the disposition of our coffin-maker was in perfect harmony with his gloomy occupation. Adrian Prokhoroff was usually gloomy and thoughtful. He rarely opened his mouth, except to scold his daughters when he found them standing idle and gazing out of the window at the passers by, or to demand for his wares an exorbitant price from those who had the misfortune—and sometimes the good fortune—to need them. Hence it was that Adrian, sitting near the window and drinking his seventh cup of tea, was immersed as usual in melancholy reflections. He thought of the pouring rain which, just a week before, had commenced to beat down during the funeral of the retired brigadier. Many of the cloaks had shrunk in consequence of the downpour, and many of the hats had been put quite out of shape. He foresaw unavoidable expenses, for his old stock of funeral dresses was in a pitiable condition. He hoped to compensate himself for his losses by the burial of old Trukhina, the shopkeeper's wife, who for more than a year had been upon the point of death. But Trukhina lay dying at Rasgouliai, and Prokhoroff was afraid that her heirs, in spite of their promise, would not take the trouble to send so far for him, but would make arrangements with the nearest undertaker.

These reflections were suddenly interrupted by three masonic knocks at the door.

"Who is there?" asked the coffin-maker.

The door opened, and a man, who at the first glance could be recognized as a German artisan, entered the room, and with a jovial air advanced towards the coffin-maker.

"Pardon me, respected neighbor," said he in that Russian dialect which to this day we cannot hear without a smile: "pardon me for disturbing you. . . . I wished to make your acquaintance as soon as possible. I am a shoemaker, my name is Gottlieb Schultz, and I live across the street, in that little house just facing

your windows. Tomorrow I am going to celebrate my silver wedding, and I have come to invite you and your daughters to dine with us."

The invitation was cordially accepted. The coffin-maker asked the shoemaker to seat himself and take a cup of tea, and thanks to the open-hearted disposition of Gottlieb Schultz, they were soon engaged in friendly conversation.

"How is business with you?" asked Adrian.

"Just so so," replied Schultz; "I cannot complain. My wares are not like yours: the living can do without shoes, but the dead cannot do without coffins."

"Very true," observed Adrian; "but if a living person hasn't anything to buy shoes with, you cannot find fault with him, he goes about barefooted; but a dead beggar gets his coffin for nothing."

In this manner the conversation was carried on between them for some time; at last the shoemaker rose and took leave of the coffin-maker, renewing his invitation.

The next day, exactly at twelve o'clock, the coffin-maker and his daughters issued from the doorway of their newly-purchased residence, and directed their steps towards the abode of their neighbor. I will not stop to describe the Russian *caftan* of Adrian Prokhoroff, nor the European toilettes of Akoulina and Daria, deviating in this respect from the usual custom of modern novelists. But I do not think it superfluous to observe that they both had on the yellow cloaks and red shoes, which they were accustomed to don on solemn occasions only.

The shoemaker's little dwelling was filled with guests, consisting chiefly of German artisans with their wives and foremen. Of the Russian officials there was present but one, Yourko the Finn, a watchman, who, in spite of his humble calling, was the special object of the host's attention. For twenty-five years he had faithfully discharged the duties of postilion of Pogorelsky. The conflagration of 1812, which destroyed the ancient capital, destroyed also his little yellow watch-house. But immediately after the expulsion of the enemy, a new one appeared in its place, painted grey and with white Doric columns, and Yourko began again to pace to and fro before it, with his axe and grey coat of mail. He was known to the greater part of the Germans who lived near the Nikitskaia Gate, and some of them had even

spent the night from Sunday to Monday beneath his roof.

Adrian immediately made himself acquainted with him, as with a man whom, sooner or later, he might have need of, and when the guests took their places at the table, they sat down beside each other. Herr Schultz and his wife, and their daughter Lotchen, a young girl of seventeen, did the honors of the table and helped the cook to serve. The beer flowed in streams; Yourko ate like four, and Adrian in no way yielded to him; his daughters, however, stood upon their dignity. The conversation, which was carried on in German, gradually grew more and more boisterous. Suddenly the host requested a moment's attention, and uncorking a sealed bottle, he said with a loud voice in Russian:

"To the health of my good Louise!"

The champagne foamed. The host tenderly kissed the fresh face of his partner, and the guests drank noisily to the health of the good Louise.

"To the health of my amiable guests!" exclaimed the host, uncorking a second bottle; and the guests thanked him by draining their glasses once more.

Then followed a succession of toasts. The health of each individual guest was drunk; they drank to the health of Moscow and to quite a dozen little German towns; they drank to the health of all corporations in general and of each in particular; they drank to the health of the masters and foremen. Adrian drank with enthusiasm and became so merry, that he proposed a facetious toast to himself. Suddenly one of the guests, a fat baker, raised his glass and exclaimed:

"To the health of those for whom we work, our customers!"

This proposal, like all the others, was joyously and unanimously received. The guests began to salute each other; the tailor bowed to the shoemaker, the shoemaker to the tailor, the baker to both, the whole company to the baker, and so on. In the midst of these mutual congratulations, Yourko exclaimed, turning to his neighbor:

"Come, little father! Drink to the health of your corpses!"

Everybody laughed, but the coffin-maker considered himself insulted, and frowned. Nobody noticed it, the guests continued to drink, and the bell had already rung for vespers when they rose from the table.

The guests dispersed at a late hour, the greater part of them in a very merry mood. The fat baker and the bookbinder, whose face seemed as if bound in red morocco, linked their arms in those of Yourko and conducted him back to his little watch-house, thus observing the proverb: "One good turn deserves another."

The coffin-maker returned home drunk and angry.

"Why is it," he exclaimed aloud, "why is it that my trade is not as honest as any other? Is a coffin-maker brother to the hangman? Why did those heathens laugh? Is a coffin-maker a buffoon? I wanted to invite them to my new dwelling and give them a feast, but now I'll do nothing of the kind. Instead of inviting them, I will invite those for whom I work: the orthodox dead."

"What is the matter, little father?" said the servant, who was engaged at that moment in taking off his boots: "why do you talk such nonsense? Make the sign of the cross! Invite the dead to your new house! What folly!"

"Yes, by the Lord! I will invite them," continued Adrian, "and that, too, for tomorrow! . . . Do me the favor, my benefactors, to come and feast with me tomorrow evening; I will regale you with what God has sent me."

With these words the coffin-maker turned into bed and soon began to snore.

It was still dark when Adrian was awakened out of his sleep. Trukhina, the shopkeeper's wife, had died during the course of that very night, and a special messenger was sent off on horseback by her bailiff to carry the news to Adrian. The coffin-maker gave him ten copecks to buy brandy with, dressed himself as hastily as possible, took a *droshky* and set out for Rasgouliai. Before the door of the house in which the deceased lay, the police had already taken their stand, and the trades-people were passing backwards and forwards, like ravens that smell a dead body. The deceased lay upon a table, yellow as wax, but not yet disfigured by decomposition. Around her stood her relatives, neighbors and domestic servants. All the windows were open; tapers were burning; and the priests were reading the prayers for the dead. Adrian went up to the nephew of Trukhina, a young shopman in a fashionable surtout, and informed him that the coffin, wax candles, pall, and the other funeral accessories would



be immediately delivered with all possible exactitude. The heir thanked him in an absent-minded manner, saying that he would not bargain about the price, but would rely upon him acting in everything according to his conscience. The coffin-maker, in accordance with his usual custom, vowed that he would not charge him too much, exchanged significant glances with the bailiff, and then departed to commence operations.

The whole day was spent in passing to and fro between Rasgouliai and the Nikitskaia Gate. Towards evening everything was finished, and he returned home on foot, after having dismissed his driver. It was a moonlight night. The coffin-maker reached the Nikitskaia Gate in safety. Near the Church of the Ascension he was hailed by our acquaintance Yourko, who, recognizing the coffin-maker, wished him good-night. It was late. The coffin-maker was just approaching his house, when suddenly he fancied he saw some one approach his gate, open the wicket, and disappear within.

"What does that mean?" thought Adrian. "Who can be wanting me again? Can it be a thief come to rob me? Or have my foolish girls got lovers coming after them? It means no good, I fear!"

And the coffin-maker thought of calling his friend Yourko to his assistance. But at that moment, another person approached the wicket and was about to enter, but seeing the master of the house hastening towards him, he stopped and took off his three-cornered hat. His face seemed familiar to Adrian, but in his hurry he had not been able to examine it closely.

"You are favoring me with a visit," said Adrian, out of breath. "Walk in, I beg of you."

"Don't stand on ceremony, little father," replied the other, in a hollow voice; "you go first, and show your guests the way."

Adrian had no time to spend upon ceremony. The wicket was open; he ascended the steps followed by the other. Adrian thought he could hear people walking about in his rooms.

"What the devil does all this mean!" he thought to himself, and he hastened to enter. But the sight that met his eyes caused his legs to give way beneath him.

The room was full of corpses. The moon, shining through the windows, lit up their yellow and blue faces, sunken mouths, dim, half-closed eyes, and protruding noses. Adrian, with horror,

recognized in them people that he himself had buried, and in the guest who entered with him, the brigadier who had been buried during the pouring rain. They all, men and women, surrounded the coffin-maker with bowings and salutations, except one poor fellow lately buried gratis, who, conscious and ashamed of his rags, did not venture to approach, but meekly kept aloof in a corner. All the others were decently dressed: the female corpses in caps and ribbons, the officials in uniforms, but with their beards unshaven, the tradesmen in their holiday *caftans*.

"You see, Prokhoroff," said the brigadier in the name of all the honorable company, "we have all risen in response to your invitation. Only those have stopped at home who were unable to come, who have crumbled to pieces and have nothing left but fleshless bones. But even of these there was one who hadn't the patience to remain behind—so much did he want to come and see you. . . ."

At this moment a little skeleton pushed his way through the crowd and approached Adrian. His fleshless face smiled affably at the coffin-maker. Shreds of green and red cloth and rotten linen hung on him here and there as on a pole, and the bones of his feet rattled inside his big jack-boots, like pestles in mortars.

"You do not recognize me, Prokhoroff," said the skeleton. "Don't you remember the retired sergeant of the Guards, Peter Petrovitch Kourilkin, the same to whom, in the year 1799, you sold your first coffin, and that, too, of deal instead of oak?"

With these words the corpse stretched out his bony arms toward him; but Adrian, collecting all his strength, shrieked and pushed him from him. Peter Petrovich staggered, fell, and crumbled all to pieces. Among the corpses arose a murmur of indignation; all stood up for the honor of their companion, and they overwhelmed Adrian with such threats and imprecations, that the poor host, deafened by their shrieks and almost crushed to death, lost his presence of mind, fell upon the bones of the retired sergeant of the Guards, and swooned away.

For some time the sun had been shining upon the bed on which lay the coffin-maker. At last he opened his eyes and saw before him the servant attending to the tea-urn. With horror Adrian recalled all the incidents of the previous day. Trukhina, the brigadier, and the sergeant, Kourilkin, rose vaguely before his imagination. He waited in silence for the servant to open

the conversation and inform him of the events of the night.

"How you have slept, little father Adrian Prokhorovitch!" said Aksinia, handing him his dressing-gown. "Your neighbor, the tailor, has been here, and the watchman also called to inform you that today is his name-day; but you were so sound asleep, that we did not wish to wake you."

"Did anyone come for me from the late Trukhina?"

"The late? Is she dead, then?"

"What a fool you are? Didn't you yourself help me yesterday to prepare the things for her funeral?"

"Have you taken leave of your senses, little father, or have you not yet recovered from the effects of yesterday's drinking-bout? What funeral was there yesterday? You spent the whole day feasting at the German's and then came home drunk and threw yourself upon the bed, and have slept till this hour, when the bells have already rung for mass."

"Really!" said the coffin-maker, greatly relieved.

"Yes, indeed," replied the servant.

"Well, since that is the case, make the tea as quickly as possible and call my daughters."

## COUNT LEO TOLSTOY

1828-1910

The son of an old aristocratic Russian family, Tolstoy was nurtured in affluent circumstances. In his early life he accepted his good fortune, just as he accepted the literary genius wherewith he was endowed. But the inner sense of failure destroyed his contentment with outward surroundings, and he became a mystic, altruist and reformer. He divided his fortune among the poor and made of his ancestral home a school for peasant children. His social ideas and his peculiar notions on art have been much criticized, but his fame as a writer is secure. In his novels "Anna Karenina," "Resurrection," "The Kreutzer Sonata," and in countless other works he shows himself one of the great masters of the Russian language, an acute psychologist, and a profound if somewhat erratic thinker.

### WHERE LOVE IS, THERE GOD IS ALSO

**I**N a certain town there lived a shoemaker named Martin Avdeitch. He lived in a basement room which possessed but one window. This window looked onto the street, and through it a glimpse could be caught of the passers-by. It is true that only their legs could be seen, but that did not matter, as Martin could recognize people by their boots alone. He had lived here for a long time, and so had many acquaintances. There were very few pairs of boots in the neighborhood which had not passed through his hands at least once, if not twice. Some he had resoled, others he had fitted with side-pieces, others, again, he had re sewn where they were split, or provided with new toe-caps. Yes, he often saw his handiwork through that window. He was given plenty of custom, for his work lasted well, his materials were good, his prices moderate, and his word to be depended on. If he could do a job by a given time it should be done; but if not, he would warn you beforehand rather than disappoint you. Everyone knew Avdeitch, and no one ever transferred his custom from him. He had always been an upright man, but with the approach of old age he had begun more than ever to think of his soul, and to draw nearer to God.

His wife had died while he was still an apprentice, leaving behind her a little boy of three. This was their only child, indeed, for the two elder ones had died previously. At first

Martin thought of placing the little fellow with a sister of his in the country, but changed his mind, thinking: "My Kapitoshka would not like to grow up in a strange family, so I will keep him by me." Then Avdeitch finished his apprenticeship, and went to live in lodgings with his little boy. But God had not seen fit to give Avdeitch happiness in his children. The little boy was just growing up and beginning to help his father and to be a pleasure to him, when he fell ill, was put to bed, and died after a week's fever.

Martin buried the little fellow and was inconsolable. Indeed, he was so inconsolable that he began to murmur against God. His life seemed so empty that more than once he prayed for death and reproached the Almighty for taking away his only beloved son instead of himself, the old man. At last he ceased altogether to go to church.

Then one day there came to see him an ancient peasant-pilgrim—one who was now in the eighth year of his pilgrimage. To him Avdeitch talked, and then went on to complain of his great sorrow.

"I no longer wish to be a God-fearing man," he said. "I only wish to die. That is all I ask of God. I am a lonely, hopeless man."

"You should not speak like that, Martin," replied the old pilgrim. "It is not for us to judge the acts of God. We must rely, not upon our own understanding, but upon the Divine wisdom. God saw fit that your son should die and that you should live. Therefore it must be better so. If you despair, it is because you have wished to live too much for your own pleasure."

"For what, then, should I live?" asked Martin.

"For God alone," replied the old man. "It is He who gave you life, and therefore it is He for whom you should live. When you come to live for Him you will cease to grieve, and your trials will become easy to bear."

Martin was silent. Then he spoke again.

"But how am I to live for God?" he asked.

"Christ has shown us the way," answered the old man. "Can you read? If so, buy a Testament and study it. You will learn there how to live for God. Yes, it is all shown you there."

These words sank into Avdeitch's soul. He went out the

same day, bought a large-print copy of the New Testament, and set himself to read it.

At the beginning Avdeitch had meant only to read on festival days, but when he once began his reading he found it so comforting to the soul that he came never to let a day pass without doing so. On the second occasion he became so engrossed that all the kerosene was burnt away in the lamp before he could tear himself away from the book.

Thus he came to read it every evening, and, the more he read, the more clearly did he understand what God required of him, and in what way he could live for God; so that his heart grew ever lighter and lighter. Once upon a time, whenever he had lain down to sleep, he had been used to moan and sigh as he thought of his little Kapitoshka; but now he only said—"Glory to Thee, O Lord! Glory to Thee! Thy will be done!"

From that time onwards Avdeitch's life became completely changed. Once he had been used to go out on festival days and drink tea in a tavern, and had not denied himself even an occasional glass of *vodka*. This he had done in the company of a boon companion, and, although no drunkard, would frequently leave the tavern in an excited state and talk much nonsense as he shouted and disputed with this friend of his. But now he had turned his back on all this, and his life had become quiet and joyous. Early in the morning he would sit down to his work, and labour through his appointed hours. Then he would take the lamp down from a shelf, light it, and sit down to read. And the more he read, the more he understood, and the clearer and happier he grew at heart.

It happened once that Martin had been reading late. He had been reading those verses in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. Luke which run:

"And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

Then, further on, he had read those verses where the Lord says:

"And why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things

which I say? Whosoever cometh to Me and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the storm beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."

Avdeitch read these words, and felt greatly cheered in soul. He took off his spectacles, laid them on the book, leaned his elbows upon the table, and gave himself up to meditation. He set himself to measure his own life by those words, and thought to himself:

"Is my house founded upon a rock or upon sand? It is well if it be upon a rock. Yet it seems so easy to me as I sit here alone. I may so easily come to think that I have done all that the Lord has commanded me, and grow careless and—sin again. Yet I will keep on striving, for it is goodly so to do. Help Thou me, O Lord."

Thus he kept on meditating, though conscious that it was time for bed; yet he was loathe to tear himself away from the book. He began to read the seventh chapter of St. Luke, and read on about the centurion, the widow's son, and the answer given to John's disciples; until in time he came to the passage where the rich Pharisee invited Jesus to his house, and the woman washed the Lord's feet with her tears and He justified her. So he came to the forty-fourth verse and read:

"And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, and thou gavest Me no water for My feet: but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment."

He read these verses and thought:

"'Thou gavest Me no water for My feet' . . . 'Thou gavest Me no kiss' . . . 'My head with oil thou did'st not anoint,' . . ."—and once again he took off his spectacles, laid them on the book, and became lost in meditation.

"I am even as that Pharisee," he thought to himself. "I drink tea and think only of my own needs. Yes, I think only of having plenty to eat and drink, of being warm and clean—but never of entertaining a guest. And Simon too was mindful only of himself, although the guest who had come to visit him was—who? Why, even the Lord himself! If, then, He should come to visit *me*, should I receive Him any better?"—and, leaning forward upon his elbows, he was asleep almost before he was aware of it.

"Martin!" someone seemed to breathe in his ear.

He started from his sleep.

"Who is there?" he said. He turned and looked towards the door, but could see no one. Again he bent forward over the table. Then suddenly he heard the words:

"Martin, Martin! Look thou into the street tomorrow, for I am coming to visit thee."

Martin roused himself, got up from the chair, and rubbed his eyes. He did not know whether it was dreaming or awake that he had heard these words, but he turned out the lamp and went to bed.

The next morning Avdeitch rose before daylight and said his prayers. Then he made up the stove, got ready some cabbage soup and porridge, lighted the *samovar*, slung his leather apron about him, and sat down to his work in the window. He sat and worked hard, yet all the time his thoughts were centered upon last night. He was in two ideas about the vision. At one moment he would think that it must have been his fancy, while the next moment he would find himself convinced that he had really heard the voice. "Yes, it must have been so," he concluded.

As Martin sat thus by the window he kept looking out of it as much as working. Whenever a pair of boots passed with which he was acquainted he would bend down to glance upwards through the window and see their owner's face as well. The doorkeeper passed in new felt boots, and then a water-carrier. Next, an old soldier, a veteran of Nicholas' army, in old, patched boots, and carrying a shovel in his hands, halted close by the window. Avdeitch knew him by his boots. His name was Stepanitch, and he was kept by a neighboring tradesman out of charity, his duties being to help the doorkeeper. He began to clear away the snow from in front of Avdeitch's window, while the shoemaker looked at him and then resumed his work.



"I think I must be getting into my dotage," thought Avdeitch with a smile. "Just because Stepanitch begins clearing away the snow I at once jump to the conclusion that Christ is about to visit me. Yes, I am growing foolish now, old greybeard that I am."

Yet he had hardly made a dozen stitches before he was craning his neck again to look out of the window. He could see that Stepanitch had placed his shovel against the wall, and was resting and trying to warm himself a little.

"He is evidently an old man now and broken," thought Avdeitch to himself. "He is not strong enough to clear away snow. Would he like some tea, I wonder? That reminds me that the *samovar* must be ready now."

He made fast his awl in his work and got up. Placing the *samovar* on the table, he brewed the tea, and then tapped with his finger on the window-pane. Stepanitch turned round and approached. Avdeitch beckoned to him, and then went to open the door.

"Come in and warm yourself," he said. "You must be frozen."

"Christ requite you!" answered Stepanitch. "Yes, my bones are almost cracking."

He came in, shook the snow off himself, and, though tottering on his feet, took pains to wipe them carefully, that he might not dirty the floor.

"Nay, do not trouble about that," said Avdeitch. "I will wipe your boots myself. It is part of my business in this trade. Come you here and sit down, and we will empty this teapot together."

He poured out two tumblerfuls, and offered one to his guest; after which he emptied his own into the saucer, and blew upon it to cool it. Stepanitch drank his tumblerful, turned the glass upside down, placed his crust upon it, and thanked his host kindly. But it was plain that he wanted another one.

"You must drink some more," said Avdeitch, and refilled his guest's tumbler and his own. Yet, in spite of himself, he had no sooner drunk his tea than he found himself looking out into the street again.

"Are you expecting anyone?" asked his guest.

"Am—am I expecting anyone? Well, to tell the truth, yes. That is to say, I am, and I am not. The fact is that some words have got fixed in my memory. Whether it was a vision or not

I cannot tell, but at all events, my old friend, I was reading in the Gospels last night about Our Little Father Christ, and how He walked this earth and suffered. You have heard of Him, have you not?"

"Yes, yes, I have heard of Him," answered Stepanitch; "but we are ignorant folk and do not know our letters."

"Well, I was reading of how He walked this earth, and how He went to visit a Pharisee, and yet received no welcome from him at the door. All this I read last night, my friend, and then fell to thinking about it—to thinking how some day I too might fail to pay Our Little Father Christ due honor. 'Suppose,' I thought to myself, 'He came to me or to anyone like me? Should we, like the great lord Simon, not know how to receive Him and not go out to meet Him?' Thus I thought, and fell asleep where I sat. Then as I sat sleeping there I heard someone call my name; and as I raised myself the voice went on (as though it were the voice of someone whispering in my ear): 'Watch thou for me tomorrow, for I am coming to visit thee.' It said that twice. And so those words have got into my head, and, foolish though I know it to be, I keep expecting *Him*—the Little Father—every moment."

Stepanitch nodded and said nothing, but emptied his glass and laid it aside. Nevertheless Avdeitch took and refilled it.

"Drink it up; it will do you good," he said. "Do you know," he went on, "I often call to mind how, when Our Little Father walked this earth, there was never a man, however humble, whom He despised, and how it was chiefly among the common people that He dwelt. It was always with *them* that He walked; it was from among *them*—from among such men as you and I—from among sinners and working folk—that He chose His disciples. 'Whosoever,' He said, 'shall exalt himself, the same shall be abased; and whosoever shall abase himself, the same shall be exalted.' 'You,' He said again, 'call me Lord; yet will I wash your feet.' 'Whosoever,' He said, 'would be chief among you, let him be the servant of all. Because,' he said, 'blessed are the lowly, the peacemakers, the merciful, and the charitable.'"

Stepanitch had forgotten all about his tea. He was an old man, and his tears came easily. He sat and listened, with the tears rolling down his cheeks.

"Oh, but you must drink your tea," said Avdeitch; yet Stepan-

itch only crossed himself and said the thanksgiving, after which he pushed his glass away and rose.

"I thank you, Martin Avdeitch," he said. "You have taken me in, and fed both soul and body."

"Nay, but I beg of you to come again," replied Avdeitch. "I am only too glad of a guest."

So Stepanitch departed, while Martin poured out the last of the tea and drank it. Then he cleaned the crockery, and sat down again to his work by the window—to the stitching of a back-piece. He stitched away, yet kept on looking through the window—looking for Christ, as it were—and ever thinking of Christ and His works. Indeed, Christ's many sayings were never absent from Avdeitch's mind.

Two soldiers passed the window, the one in military boots, and the other in civilian. Next, there came a neighboring householder, in polished goloshes; then a baker with a basket. All of them passed on. Presently a woman in woolen stockings and rough country shoes approached the window, and halted near the buttress outside it. Avdeitch peered up at her from under the lintel of his window, and could see that she was a plain-looking, poorly dressed woman and had a child in her arms. It was in order to muffle the child up more closely—little though she had to do it with!—that she had stopped near the buttress and was now standing there with her back to the wind. Her clothing was ragged and fit only for summer, and even from behind his window-panes Avdeitch could hear the child crying miserably and its mother vainly trying to soothe it. Avdeitch rose, went to the door, climbed the steps, and cried out: "My good woman, my good woman!"

She heard him and turned round.

"Why need you stand there in the cold with your baby?" he went on. "Come into my room, where it is warm, and where you will be able to wrap the baby up more comfortably than you can do here. Yes, come in with you."

The woman was surprised to see an old man in a leather apron and with spectacles upon his nose calling out to her, yet she followed him down the steps, and they entered his room. The old man led her to the bedstead.

"Sit you down here, my good woman," he said. "You will be near the stove, and can warm yourself and feed your baby."

"Ah, but I have no milk left in my breast," she replied. "I have had nothing to eat this morning." Nevertheless she put the child to suck.

Avdeitch nodded his head approvingly, went to the table for some bread and a basin, and opened the stove door. From the stove he took and poured some soup into the basin, and drew out also a bowl of porridge. The latter, however, was not yet boiling, so he set out only the soup, after first laying the table with a cloth.

"Sit down and eat, my good woman," he said, "while I hold your baby. I have had little ones of my own, and know how to nurse them."

The woman crossed herself and sat down, while Avdeitch seated himself upon the bedstead with the baby. He smacked his lips at it once or twice, but made a poor show of it, for he had no teeth left. Consequently the baby went on crying. Then he bethought him of his finger, which he wriggled to and fro towards the baby's mouth and back again—without, however, actually touching the little one's lips, since the finger was blackened with work and sticky with shoemaker's wax. The baby contemplated the finger and grew quiet—then actually smiled. Avdeitch was delighted. Meanwhile the woman had been eating her meal, and now she told him, unasked, who she was and whither she was going.

"I am a soldier's wife," she said, "but my husband was sent to a distant station eight months ago, and I have heard nothing of him since. At first I got a place as cook, but when the baby came they said they could not do with it and dismissed me. That was three months ago, and I have got nothing since, and have spent all my savings. I tried to get taken as a wet nurse, but no one would have me, for they said I was too thin. I have just been to see a tradesman's wife where our grandmother is in service. She had promised to take me on, and I quite thought that she would, but when I arrived today she told me to come again next week. She lives a long way from here, and I am quite worn out and have tired my baby for nothing. Thank Heaven, however, my landlady is good to me, and gives me shelter for Christ's sake. Otherwise I should not have known how to bear it all."

Avdeitch sighed and said: "But have you nothing warm to

wear?"

"Ah, sir," replied the woman, "although it is the time for warm clothes, I had to pawn my last shawl yesterday for two *grivenki*."

Then the woman returned to the bedstead to take her baby, while Avdeitch rose and went to a cupboard. There he rummaged about, and presently returned with an old jacket.

"Here," he said, "It is a poor old thing, but it will serve to cover you."

The woman looked at the jacket, and then at the old man. Then she took the jacket and burst into tears. Avdeitch turned away, and went creeping under the bedstead, whence he extracted a box and pretended to rummage about in it for a few moments; after which he sat down again before the woman.

Then the woman said to him: "I thank you in Christ's name, good grandfather. Surely it was He Himself who sent me to your window. Otherwise I should have seen my baby perish with the cold. When I first came out the day was warm, but now it has begun to freeze. But He, Our Little Father, had placed you in your window, that you might see me in my bitter plight and have compassion upon me."

Avdeitch smiled and said: "He did indeed place me there: yet, my poor woman, it was for a special purpose that I was looking out."

Then he told his guest, the soldier's wife, of his vision, and how he had heard a voice fortelling that today the Lord Himself would come to visit him.

"That may very well be," said the woman as she rose, took the jacket, and wrapped her baby in it. Then she saluted him once more and thanked him.

"Also, take this in Christ's name," said Avdeitch, and gave her a two-*grivenka* piece with which to buy herself a shawl. The woman crossed herself, and he likewise. Then he led her to the door and dismissed her.

When she had gone Avdeitch ate a little soup, washed up the crockery again, and resumed his work. All the time, though, he kept his eye upon the window, and as soon as ever a shadow fell across it he would look up to see who was passing. Acquaintances of his came past, and people whom he did not know, yet never anyone very particular.

Then suddenly he saw something. Opposite his window there had stopped an old peddler-woman, with a basket of apples. Only a few of the apples, however, remained, so that it was clear that she was almost sold out. Over her shoulder was slung a sack of shavings, which she must have gathered near some new building as she was going home. Apparently, her shoulder had begun to ache under their weight, and she therefore wished to shift them to the other one. To do this, she balanced her basket of apples on the top of a post, lowered the sack to the pavement, and began shaking up its contents. As she was doing this, a boy in a ragged cap appeared from somewhere, seized an apple from the basket, and tried to make off. But the old woman, who had been on her guard, managed to turn and seize the boy by the sleeve, and although he struggled and tried to break away, she clung to him with both hands, snatched his cap off, and finally grasped him by the hair. Thereupon the youngster began to shout and abuse his captor. Avdeitch did not stop to make fast his awl, but threw his work down upon the floor, ran to the door, and went stumbling up the steps—losing his spectacles as he did so. Out into the street he ran, where the old woman was still clutching the boy by the hair and threatening to take him to the police, while the boy, for his part, was struggling in the endeavor to free himself.

"I never took it," he was saying. "What are you beating me for? Let me go?"

Avdeitch tried to part them as he took the boy by the hand and said:

"Let him go, my good woman. Pardon him for Christ's sake."

"Yes, I will pardon him," she retorted, "but not until he has tasted a new birch-rod. I mean to take the young rascal to the police."

But Avdeitch still interceded for him.

"Let him go, my good woman," he said. "He will never do it again. Let him go for Christ's sake."

The old woman released the boy, who was for making off at once had not Avdeitch stopped him.

"You must beg the old woman's pardon," he said, "and never do such a thing again. I saw you take the apple."

The boy burst out crying, and begged the old woman's pardon as Avdeitch commanded.

"There, there," said Avdeitch. "Now I will give you one. Here you are,"—and he took an apple from the basket and handed it to the boy. "I will pay you for it, my good woman," he added.

"Yes, but you spoil the young rascal by doing that," she objected. "He ought to have received a reward that would have made him glad to stand for a week."

"Ah, my good dame, my good dame," exclaimed Avdeitch. "That may be *our* way of rewarding, but it is not God's. If this boy ought to have been whipped for taking the apple, ought not we also to receive something for our sins?"

The old woman was silent. Then Avdeitch related to her the parable of the master who absolved his servant from the great debt which he owed him, whereupon the servant departed and took his own debtor by the throat. The old woman listened, and also the boy.

"God has commanded us to pardon one another," went on Avdeitch, "or *He* will not pardon us. We ought to pardon all men, and especially the thoughtless."

The old woman shook her head and sighed.

"Yes, that may be so," she said, "but these young rascals are so spoilt already!"

"Then it is for us, their elders, to teach them better," he replied.

"That is what I say myself, at times," rejoined the old woman. "I had seven of them once at home, but have only one daughter now." And she went on to tell Avdeitch where she and her daughter lived, and how they lived, and how many grandchildren she had.

"I have only such strength as you see," she said, "yet I work hard, for my heart goes out to my grandchildren—the bonny little things that they are! No children could run to meet me as they do. Aksintka, for instance, will go to no one else. 'Grandmother,' she cries, 'dear grandmother, you are tired'"—and the old woman became thoroughly softened. "Everyone knows what boys are," she added presently, referring to the culprit. "May God go with him!"

She was raising the sack to her shoulders again when the boy darted forward and said:

"Nay, let me carry it, grandmother. It will be all on my way

home."

The old woman nodded assent, gave up the sack to the boy, and went away with him down the street. She had quite forgotten to ask Avdeitch for the money for the apple. He stood looking after them, and observing how they were talking together as they went.

Having seen them go, he returned to his room, finding his spectacles—unbroken—on the steps as he descended them. Once more he took up his awl and fell to work, but had done little before he found it difficult to distinguish the stitches, and the lamplighter had passed on his rounds. "I too must light up," he thought to himself. So he trimmed the lamp, hung it up, and resumed his work. He finished one boot completely, and then turned it over to look at it. It was all good work. Then he laid aside his tools, swept up the cuttings, rounded off the stitches and loose ends, and cleared his awl. Next he lifted the lamp down, placed it on the table, and took his Testament from the shelf. He had intended opening the book at the place which he had marked last night with a strip of leather, but it opened itself at another instead. The instant it did so, his vision of last night came back to his memory, and, as instantly, he thought he heard a movement behind him as of someone moving towards him. He looked round and saw in the shadow of a dark corner what appeared to be figures—figures of persons standing there, yet could not distinguish them clearly. Then the voice whispered in his ear:

"Martin, Martin, dost thou not know Me?"

"Who art Thou?" said Avdeitch.

"Even I!" whispered the voice again. "Lo, it is I!" and there stepped from the dark corner Stepanitch. He smiled, and then, like the fading of a little cloud, was gone.

"It is I!" whispered the voice again—and there stepped from the same corner the woman with her baby. She smiled, and the baby smiled, and they were gone.

"And it is I!" whispered the voice again—and there stepped forth the old woman and the boy with the apple. They smiled, and were gone.

Joy filled the soul of Martin Avdeitch as he crossed himself, put on his spectacles, and set himself to read the Testament at the place where it had opened. At the top of the page he read



"For I was hungry, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in."

And further down the page he read:

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto Me."

Then Avdeitch understood that the vision had come true, and that his Saviour had in very truth visited him that day, and that he had received Him.

ARTEMUS WARD  
(CHARLES FARRER BROWN)

1834-1867

One of the earlier American humorists, who under his pseudonym of Artemus Ward became famous. He began life in a little mid-western town, where he struggled along as editor of a country newspaper. Gradually he attracted attention, and was invited to come to New York to write for a newspaper syndicate, receiving what seemed to him fabulous sums. In his later life he went to England, where he died. There is in his broadly humorous writings an underlying strain of social satire. His work is published in three volumes, namely: "Artemus Ward: His Book," "Artemus Ward: His Travels," and "Artemus Ward in London."

ARTEMUS WARD'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

NEW YORK, NEAR FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL,

*Org. 31ct.*

**E**DITER of Play Bill. Dr Sir,—Yrs, into which you ask me to send you sum leadin incidents in my life so you can write my Bogfry for the papers, cum dooly to hand. I hav no doubt that a article onto my life, grammattycally jerked and properly punktooated, would be a addition to the chois literatoor of the day.

To the yooth of Ameriky it would be vallyble as showin how high a pinnykle of fame a man can reach who commenst his career with a small canvas tent and a pea-green ox, which he rubbed it off while scratchin hisself agin the center pole, causin in Rahway, N. J., a discriminatin mob to say humbugs would not go down in their village. The ox resoom'd agricultooral pursoots shortly afterwards.

I next tried my hand at givin Blind-man concerts, appearin as the poor blind man myself. But the infamus cuss who I hired to lead me round towns in the day time to excite simpathy drank freely of spirituous licker unbeknowns to me one day, & while under their infloouance he led me into the canal. I had to either tear the green bandige from my eyes or be drowned. I tho't I'd restore my eyesight.

In writin about these things, Mr Editer, kinder smooth 'em over. Speak of 'em as eccentricities of gen'us.

My next ventur would hav bin a success if I hadn't tried to do too much. I got up a series of wax figgers, and among others one of Socrates. I tho't a wax figger of old Sock. would be poplar with eddycated peple, but unfortinitly I put a Brown linen duster and a U. S. Army regulation cap on him, which peple with classycal eddycations said it was a farce. This enterprise was onfortnit in other respects. At a certin town I advertised a wax figger of the Hon'ble Amos Perkins, who was a Railroad President, and a great person in them parts. But it appeared I had shown the same figger for a Pirut named Gibbs in that town the previs season, which created a intense toomult, & the audience remarked "shame onto me," & other statements of the same similarness. I tried to mollify 'em. I told 'em that any family possessin children might have my she tiger to play with half a day, & I wouldn't charge 'em a cent, but alars! it was of no avail. I was forced to leave, & I infer from a article in the *Advertiser* of that town, in which the Editor says, "Altho' time has silvered this man's hed with its frosts, he still brazenly wallows in infamy. Still are his snakes stuffed, and his wax works unreliable. We are glad that he has concluded to never revisit our town, altho', incredible as it may appear, the fellow really did contemplate so doing last summer, when, still true to the craven instincts of his black heart, he wrote the hireling knaves of the obscure journal across the street to know what they would charge for 400 small bills, to be done on yellow paper. We shall recur to this matter again."

I say, I infer from this article that a prejudiss still exists agin me in that town.

I will not speak of my once being in straitend circumstances in a sertin town, and of my endeavorin to accoomulate welth by lettin myself to Sabbath School picnics to sing ballads adapted to the understandins of little children, accompanyin myself on a claronett—which I forgot where I was one day, singin, instid of "Oh, how pleasant to be a little child,"

"Rip slap—set 'em up again,

Right in the middle of a three-cent pie."

which mistake, added to the fact that I couldn't play onto the claironett except makin it howl dismal, broke up the picnic, and children said, in voices choked with sobs and emotions, where was their home and where was their Pa? and I said, Be quiet,

dear children, I am you Pa, which made a young woman with two twins by her side say very angrily, "Good heavens forbid you should ever be the Pa of any of these innocent ones, unless it is much desirable for them to expire igminyusly upon to a murderer's gallus!"

I say I will not speak of this. Let it be Berrid into Oblivyun.

In your article, Mr Editor, please tell him what sort of a man I am.

If you see fit to kriticise my Show, speak your mind freely. I do not object to kriticism. Tell tle public, in a candid and graceful article, that my Show abounds in moral and startlin cooriosities, any one of whom is wuth dubble the price of admission.

I have thus far spoke of myself excloosivly as a exhibiter.

I was born in the State of Maine of parents. As a infant I attracted a great deal of attention. The nabers would stand over my cradle for hours and say, "How bright that little face looks! How much it nose!" The young ladies would carry me round in their arms, sayin I was muzzer's bezzy darlin and a sweety 'eety 'ittle ting. It was nice, tho' I wasn't old enuff to properly appreciate it. I'm a healthy old darlin now.

I have allers sustained a good moral character. I was never a Railroad director in my life.

Altho' in early life I did not inva'bly confine myself to truth in my small bills, I have been gradooally growin respectabler and respectabler ev'ry year. I luv my children, and never mistake another man's wife for my own. I'm not a member of any meetin house, but firmly bel'eve in meetin houses, and shouldn't feel safe to take a dose of laudnum and lay down in the street of a village that hadn't any, with a thousand dollars in my vest pockets.

My temperament is billious, altho' I don't owe a dollar in the world.

I am a early riser, but my wife is a Presbyterian. I may add that I am also bald-heded. I keep two cows.

I liv in Baldinsville, Indiany. My next door naber is Old Steve Billins. I'll tell you a little story about Old Steve that will make you larf. He jined the Church last spring, and the minister said, "You must go home now, Brother Billins, and erect a family altar in your own house," whereupon the egrejis

old ass went home and built a reg'lar pulpit in his settin room. He had the jiners in his house over four days.

I am 56 (56) years of age. Time, with its relentless scythe is ever busy. The Old Sexton gathers them in, he gathers them in! I keep a pig this year.

I don't think of anything more, Mr. Ed'ter.

If you should giv my portrait in connection with my Bogfry, please have me ingraved in a languishin attitood, leanin on a marble pillar, leavin my back hair as it is now.—Trooly yours,

ARTEMUS WARD.

## WILLIAM AUSTIN

1778-1841

Born and died in Charlestown, Massachusetts. A lawyer by profession. Among his friends was Charles Brockden Brown, the first American who followed Letters as a profession, and who may have suggested to Austin the one story for which the latter is remembered, namely, "Peter Rugg, the Missing Man." This story is considered an interesting and significant achievement of our early literature. It was originally part of a collection entitled "Letters from London."

### PETER RUGG, THE MISSING MAN

FROM JONATHAN DUNWELL OF NEW YORK, TO

MR. HERMAN M. KRAUEF

SIR.—Agreeably to my promise, I now relate to you all the particulars of the lost man and child which I have been able to collect. It is entirely owing to the humane interest you seemed to take in the report, that I have pursued the inquiry to the following result.

You may remember that business called me to Boston in the summer of 1820. I sailed in the packet to Providence, and when I arrived there, I learned that every seat in the stage was engaged. I was thus obliged either to wait a few hours or accept a seat with the driver, who civilly offered me that accommodation. Accordingly I took my seat by his side, and soon found him intelligent and communicative.

When we had travelled about ten miles, the horses suddenly threw their ears on their necks, as flat as a hare's. Said the driver, "Have you a surtout with you?" "No," said I; "why do you ask?" "You will want one soon," said he; "do you observe the ears of all the horses?" "Yes, and was just about to ask the reason." "They see the storm-breeder, and we shall see him soon." At this moment there was not a cloud visible in the firmament. Soon after a small speck appeared in the road. "There," said my companion, "comes the storm-breeder; he always leaves a Scotch mist behind him. By many a wet jacket do I remember him. I suppose the poor fellow suffers much himself, much more than is known to the world." Presently a man with a child beside

him, with a large black horse, and a weather-beaten chair, once built for a chaise body, passed in great haste, apparently at the rate of twelve miles an hour. He seemed to grasp the reins of his horse with firmness, and appeared to anticipate his speed. He seemed dejected, and looked anxiously at the passengers, particularly at the stage-driver and myself. In a moment after he passed us, the horses' ears were up and bent themselves forward so that they nearly met. "Who is that man?" said I; "he seems in great trouble." "Nobody knows who he is, but his person and the child are familiar to me. I have met them more than a hundred times, and have been so often asked the way to Boston by that man, even when he was travelling directly from that town, that of late I have refused any communication with him, and that is the reason he gave me such a fixed look." "But does he never stop anywhere?" "I have never know him to stop anywhere longer than to inquire the way to Boston; and, let him be where he may, he will tell you he cannot stay a moment, for he must reach Boston that night."

We were now ascending a high hill in Walpole, and as we had a fair view of the heavens, I was rather disposed to jeer the driver for thinking of his surtout, as not a cloud as big as a marble could be discerned. "Do you look," said he, "in the direction whence the man came, that is the place to look; the storm never meets him, it follows him." We presently approached another hill, and when at the height, the driver pointed out in an eastern direction a little black speck about as big as a hat. "There," said he, "is the seed storm; we may possibly reach Polley's before it reaches us, but the wanderer and his child will go to Providence through rain, thunder, and lightning." And now the horses, as though taught by instinct, hastened with increased speed. The little black cloud came on rolling over the turnpike, and doubled and trebled itself in all directions. The appearance of this cloud attracted the notice of all the passengers; for after it had spread itself to a great bulk, it suddenly became more limited in circumference, grew more compact, dark, and consolidated. And now the successive flashes of chain lightning caused the whole cloud to appear like a sort of irregular network, and displayed a thousand fantastic images. The driver bespoke my attention to a remarkable configuration in the cloud; he said every flash of

lightning near its centre discovered to him distinctly the form of a man sitting in an open carriage drawn by a black horse. But in truth I saw no such thing. The man's fancy was doubtless at fault. It is a very common thing for the imagination to paint for the senses, both in the visible and invisible world.

In the meantime the distant thunder gave notice of a shower at hand, and just as we reached Polley's tavern the rain poured down in torrents. It was soon over, the cloud passing in the direction of the turnpike towards Providence. In a few moments after, a respectable-looking man in a chaise stopped at the door. The man and child in the chair having excited some little sympathy among the passengers, the gentleman was asked if he had observed them. He said he had met them; that the man seemed bewildered, and inquired the way to Boston; that he was driving at great speed, as though he expected to outstrip the tempest; that the moment he had passed him a thunderclap broke distinctly over the man's head and seemed to envelop both man and child, horse and carriage. "I stopped," said the gentleman, "supposing the lightning had struck him, but the horse only seemed to loom up and increase his speed, and, as well as I could judge, he travelled just as fast as the thunder cloud." While this man was speaking, a pedler with a cart of tin merchandise came up, all dripping; and, on being questioned, he said he had met that man and carriage, within a fortnight, in four different States; that at each time he had inquired the way to Boston, and that a thunder-shower like the present had each time deluged him, his wagon, and his wares, setting his tin pots, etc., afloat, so that he had determined to get marine insurance done for the future. But that which excited his surprise most was the strange conduct of his horse, for that, long before he could distinguish the man in the chair, his own horse stood still in the road and flung back his ears. "In short," said the pedler, "I wish never to see that man and horse again; they do not look to me as if they belonged to this world."

This is all that I could learn at that time; and the occurrence soon after would have become with me like one of those things which had never happened, had I not, as I stood recently on the doorstep of Bennett's hotel in Hartford, heard a man say, "There goes Peter Rugg and his child! he looks wet and weary, and far-



ther from Boston than ever." I was satisfied it was the same man that I had seen more than three years before; for whoever has once seen Peter Rugg can never after be deceived as to his identity. "Peter Rugg!" said I, "and who is Peter Rugg?" "That," said the stranger, "is more than anyone can tell exactly. He is a famous traveller, held in light esteem by all innholders, for he never stops to eat, drink, or sleep. I wonder why the Government does not employ him to carry the mail." "Ay," said a bystander, "that is a thought bright only on one side. How long would it take, in that case, to send a letter to Boston? For Peter has already, to my knowledge, been more than twenty years travelling to that place." "But," said I, "does the man never stop anywhere, does he never converse with anyone? I saw the same man more than three years since, near Providence, and I heard a strange story about him. Pray, sir, give me some account of this man." "Sir," said the stranger, "those who know the most respecting that man say the least. I have heard it asserted that heaven sometimes sets a mark on a man, either for a judgment or a trial. Under which Peter Rugg now labors I cannot say; therefore I am rather inclined to pity than to judge." "You speak like a humane man," said I, "and if you have known him so long, I pray you will give me some account of him. Has his appearance much altered in that time?" "Why, yes; he looks as though he never ate, drank, or slept; and his child looks older than himself; and he looks like time broke off from eternity and anxious to gain a resting-place." "And how does his horse look?" said I. "As for his horse, he looks fatter and gayer, and shows more animation and courage, than he did twenty years ago. The last time Rugg spoke to me he inquired how far it was to Boston. I told him just one hundred miles. 'Why,' said he, 'how can you deceive me so? It is cruel to deceive a traveller. I have lost my way. Pray direct me the nearest way to Boston.' I repeated it was one hundred miles. 'How can you say so?' said he. 'I was told last evening it was but fifty, and I have travelled all night.' 'But,' said I, 'you are now travelling from Boston. You must turn back.' 'Alas!' said he, 'it is all turn back! Boston shifts with the wind, and plays all around the compass. One man tells me it is to the east, another to the west; and the guide-posts, too, they all point the wrong way.' 'But will you not stop and rest?'

said I; 'you seem wet and weary.' 'Yes,' said he, 'it has been foul weather since I left home.' 'Stop, then, and refresh yourself.' 'I must not stop, I must reach home to-night, if possible, though I think you must be mistaken in the distance to Boston.' He then gave the reins to his horse, which he restrained with difficulty, and disappeared in a moment. A few days afterwards I met the man a little this side of Claremont, winding around the hills in Unity, at the rate, I believe, of twelve miles an hour."

"Is Peter Rugg his real name, or has he accidentally gained that name?" "I know not, but presume he will not deny his name; you can ask him, for see, he has turned his horse and is passing this way." In a moment a dark-colored, high-spirited horse approached, and would have passed without stopping, but I had resolved to speak to Peter Rugg, or whoever the man might be. Accordingly, I stepped into the street, and as the horse approached I made a feint of stopping him. The man immediately reined in his horse. "Sir," said I, "may I be so bold as to inquire if you are not Mr. Rugg? for I think I have seen you before." "My name is Peter Rugg," said he; "I have unfortunately lost my way; I am wet and weary, and will take it kindly of you to direct me to Boston." "You live in Boston, do you, and in what street?" "In Middle Street." "When did you leave Boston?" "I cannot tell precisely; it seems a considerable time." "But how did you and your child become so wet? it has not rained here to-day?" "It has just rained a heavy shower up the river. But I shall not reach Boston to-night if I tarry. Would you advise me to take the old road, or the turnpike?" "Why, the old road is one hundred and seventeen miles, and the turnpike is ninety-seven." "How can you say so? you impose on me; it is wrong to trifle with a traveller; you know it is but forty miles from Newburyport to Boston." "But this is not Newburyport; this is Hartford." "Do not deceive me, sir. Is not this town Newburyport, and the river that I have been following the Merrimac?" "No, sir; this is Hartford, and the river the Connecticut." He wrung his hands and looked incredulous. "Have the rivers, too, changed their courses as the cities have changed places? But see, the clouds are gathering in the south, and we shall have a rainy night. Ah, that fatal oath!" He would tarry no longer. His impatient horse leaped off, his hind flanks rising like wings—he seemed to devour

all before him and to scorn all behind.

I had now, as I thought, discovered a clew to the history of Peter Rugg, and I determined, the next time my business called me to Boston, to make a further inquiry. Soon after I was enabled to collect the following particulars from Mrs. Croft, an aged lady in Middle Street, who has resided in Boston during the last twenty years. Her narration is this: The last summer a person, just at twilight, stopped at the door of the late Mrs. Rugg. Mrs. Croft, on coming to the door, perceived a stranger, with a child by his side, in an old, weather-beaten carriage, with a black horse. The stranger asked for Mrs. Rugg, and was informed that Mrs. Rugg had died, at a good old age, more than twenty years before that time. The stranger replied, "How can you deceive me so? do ask Mrs. Rugg to step to the door." "Sir, I assure you Mrs. Rugg has not lived here these nineteen years; no one lives here but myself, and my name is Betsey Croft." The stranger paused, and looked up and down the street, and said, "Though the painting is rather faded, this looks like my house." "Yes," said the child, "that is the stone before the door that I used to sit on to eat my bread and milk." "But," said the stranger, "it seems to be on the wrong side of the street. Indeed, everything here seems to be misplaced. The streets are all changed, the people are all changed, the town seems changed, and, what is strangest of all, Catharine Rugg has deserted her husband and child." "Pray," said the stranger, "has John Foy come home from sea? He went a long voyage; he is my kinsman. If I could see him, he could give me some account of Mrs. Rugg." "Sir," said Mrs. Croft, "I never heard of John Foy. Where did he live?" "Just above here, in Orange-Tree Lane." "There is no such place in this neighborhood." "What do you tell me! Are the streets gone? Orange-Tree Lane is at the head of Hanover Street, near Pemberton's Hill." "There is no such lane now." "Madam! you cannot be serious. But you doubtless know my brother, William Rugg. He lives in Royal Exchange Lane, near King Street." "I know of no such lane; and I am sure there is no such street as King Street in this town." "No such street as King Street? Why, woman! you mock me. You may as well tell me there is no King George. However, madam, you see I am wet and weary. I must find a resting-place. I will go to

Hart's tavern, near the market." "Which market, sir? for you seem perplexed; we have several markets." "You know there is but one market, near the town dock." "Oh, the old market. But no such man as Hart has kept there these twenty years."

Here the stranger seemed disconcerted, and muttered to himself quite audibly: "Strange mistake! How much this looks like the town of Boston! It certainly has a great resemblance to it; but I perceive my mistake now. Some other Mrs. Rugg, some other Middle Street." Then said he, "Madam, can you direct me to Boston?" "Why, this is Boston, the city of Boston. I know of no other Boston." "City of Boston it may be, but it is not the Boston where I live. I recollect now, I came over a bridge instead of a ferry. Pray what bridge is that I just came over?" "It is Charles River Bridge." "I perceive my mistake; there is a ferry between Boston and Charlestown, there is no bridge. Ah, I perceive my mistake. If I was in Boston, my horse would carry me directly to my own door. But my horse shows by his impatience that he is in a strange place. Absurd, that I should have mistaken this place for the old town of Boston! It is a much finer city than the town of Boston. It has been built long since Boston. I fancy Boston must lie at a distance from this city, as the good woman seems ignorant of it." At these words his horse began to chafe, and strike the pavement with his forefeet; the stranger seemed a little bewildered, and said, "No home to-night," and, giving the reins to his horse, passed up the street, and I saw no more of him.

It was evident that the generation to which Peter Rugg belonged had passed away.

This was all the account of Peter Rugg I could obtain from Mrs. Croft; but she directed me to an elderly man, Mr. James Felt, who lived near her, and who had kept a record of the principal occurrences for the last fifty years. At my request she sent for him; and, after I had related to him the object of my inquiry, Mr. Felt told me he had known Rugg in his youth; that his disappearance had caused some surprise; but as it sometimes happens that men run away, sometimes to be rid of others, and sometimes to be rid of themselves; and as Rugg took his child with him, and his own horse, and chair; and as it did not appear that any creditors made a stir, the occurrence soon mingled itself in

the stream of oblivion ; and Rugg and his child, horse and chair, were soon forgotten. "It is true," said Mr. Felt, "sundry stories grew out of Rugg's affair, whether true or false I cannot tell ; but stranger things have happened in my day, without even a newspaper notice." "Sir," said I, "Peter Rugg is now living. I have lately seen Peter Rugg and his child, horse, and chair ; therefore I pray you to relate to me all you know or ever heard of him." "Why, my friend," said James Felt, "that Peter Rugg is now a living man I will not deny ; but that you have seen Peter Rugg and his child is impossible, if you mean a small child, for Jenny Rugg, if living, must be at least—let me see—Boston Massacre, 1770—Jenny Rugg was about ten years old. Why, sir, Jenny Rugg if living must be more than sixty years of age. That Peter Rugg is living is highly probable, as he was only ten years older than myself ; and I was only eighty last March, and I am as likely to live twenty years longer as any man." Here I perceived that Mr. Felt was in his dotage, and I despaired of gaining any intelligence from him on which I could depend.

I took my leave of Mrs. Croft, and proceeded to my lodgings at the Marlborough hotel.

If Peter Rugg, thought I, has been travelling since the Boston Massacre, there is no reason why he should not travel to the end of time. If the present generation know little of him, the next will know less, and Peter and his child will have no hold on this world.

In the course of the evening I related my adventure in Middle Street. "Ha !" said one of the company, smiling, "do you really think you have seen Peter Rugg ? I have heard my grandfather speak of him as though he seriously believed his own story." "Sir," said I, "pray let us compare your grandfather's story of Mr. Rugg with my own." "Peter Rugg, sir, if my grandfather was worthy of credit, once lived in Middle Street, in this city. He was a man in comfortable circumstances, had a wife and one daughter, and was generally esteemed for his sober life and manners. But unhappily his temper at times was altogether ungovernable, and then his language was terrible. In these fits of passion, if a door stood in his way he would never do less than kick a panel through. He would sometimes throw his heels over his head, and come down on his feet, uttering oaths in a circle. And

thus, in a rage, he was the first who performed a somerset, and did what others have since learned to do for merriment and money. Once Rugg was seen to bite a tenpenny nail in halves. In those days everybody, both men and boys, wore wigs; and Peter, at those moments of violent passion would become so profane that his wig would rise up from his head. Some said it was on account of his terrible language; others accounted for it in a more philosophical way, and said it was caused by the expansion of his scalp, as violent passion, we know, will swell the veins and expand the head. While these fits were on him, Rugg had no respect for heaven or earth. Except this infirmity, all agreed that Rugg was a good sort of a man; for when his fits were over, nobody was so ready to commend a placid temper as Peter.

"It was late in autumn, one morning, that Rugg, in his own chair, with a fine large bay horse, took his daughter and proceeded to Concord. On his return a violent storm overtook him. At dark he stopped in Menotomy (now West Cambridge), at the door of a Mr. Cutter, a friend of his, who urged him to tarry overnight. On Rugg's declining to stop, Mr. Cutter urged him vehemently. 'Why, Mr. Rugg,' said Cutter, 'the storm is overwhelming you; the night is exceeding dark; your little daughter will perish; you are in an open chair, and the tempest is increasing.' *'Let the storm increase,'* said Rugg, with a fearful oath, *'I will see home to-night, in spite of the last tempest! or may I never see home.'* At these words he gave his whip to his high-spirited horse, and disappeared in a moment. But Peter Rugg did not reach home that night, nor the next; nor, when he became a missing man, could he ever be traced beyond Mr. Cutter's in Menotomy. For a long time after, on every dark and stormy night, the wife of Peter Rugg would fancy she heard the crack of a whip, and the fleet tread of a horse, and the rattling of a carriage, passing her door. The neighbors, too, heard the same noises, and some said they knew it was Rugg's horse; the tread on the pavement was perfectly familiar to them. This occurred so repeatedly that at length the neighbors watched with lanterns, and saw the real Peter Rugg, with his own horse and chair, and child sitting beside him, pass directly before his own door, his head turning towards his house, and himself making every effort to stop his horse, but in vain. The next day the friends of Mrs.

Rugg exerted themselves to find her husband and child. They inquired at every public house and stable in town; but it did not appear that Rugg made any stay in Boston. No one, after Rugg had passed his own door, could give any account of him; though it was asserted by some that the clatter of Rugg's horse and carriage over the pavements shook the houses on both sides of the street. And this is credible, if, indeed, Rugg's horse and carriage did pass on that night. For at this day, in many of the streets, a loaded truck or team in passing will shake the houses like an earthquake. However, Rugg's neighbors never afterwards watched again; some of them treated it all as a delusion, and thought no more of it. Others, of a different opinion, shook their heads and said nothing. Thus Rugg and his child, horse and chair, were soon forgotten; and probably many in the neighborhood never heard a word on the subject.

"There was indeed a rumor that Rugg afterwards was seen in Connecticut, between Suffield and Hartford, passing through the country like a streak of chalk. This gave occasion to Rugg's friends to make further inquiry. But the more they inquired, the more they were baffled. If they heard of Rugg one day in Connecticut, the next day they heard of him winding around the hills in New Hampshire, and soon after, a man in a chair, with a small child exactly answering the description of Peter Rugg, would be seen in Rhode Island, inquiring the way to Boston.

"But that which chiefly gave a color of mystery to the story of Peter Rugg was the affair at Charlestown bridge. The toll-gatherer asserted that sometimes, on the darkest and most stormy nights, when no object could be discerned, about the time Rugg was missing, a horse and wheel carriage, with a noise equal to a troop, would at midnight, in utter contempt of the rates of toll, pass over the bridge. This occurred so frequently that the toll-gatherer resolved to attempt a discovery. Soon after, at the usual time, apparently the same horse and carriage approached the bridge from Charlestown square. The toll-gatherer, prepared, took his stand as near the middle of the bridge as he dared, with a large three-legged stool in his hand. As the appearance passed, he threw the stool at the horse, but heard nothing except the noise of the stool skipping across the bridge. The toll-gatherer on the next day asserted that the stool went directly through the body

of the horse, and he persisted in that belief ever after. Whether Rugg, or whoever the person was, ever passed the bridge again, the toll-gatherer would never tell; and when questioned, seemed anxious to waive the subject. And thus Peter Rugg and his child, horse, and carriage, remain a mystery to this day."

This, sir, is all that I could learn of Peter Rugg in Boston. . . .



## WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

1794-1878

The first national poet of America. He was born in a frontier village in Massachusetts and there passed his boyhood, attending the district school and working on the farm by day and reading by night. His college life was cut short through lack of funds, and, grieving over the failure of his plans, he wrote, at seventeen, "Thanatopsis," one of the finest poems in American literature. Later he became a lawyer and an occasional contributor to periodicals. His first volume of poems was published in 1821. In 1824 he went to New York, where he finally became editor-in-chief of the *Evening Post*, a position he held for fifty years. He prospered greatly, and was able to take several trips abroad. His family life was ideally happy. In his own time he was a commanding literary figure. His poems are still worth reading. His prose, however, is journalistic rather than literary in character.

## FREDERICK SCHILLER

*Address Delivered Nov. 11, 1859*

IT might seem a presumptuous, if not an absurd, proceeding for an American to speak of the literary character of Schiller in the presence of Germans, who are familiar with all that he has written to a degree which cannot be expected of us, and by whom the spirit of his writings, to the minutest particular, must be far more easily, and, we may therefore suppose, should be more thoroughly apprehended. Yet let me be allowed to say that the name of Schiller, more than that of any other poet of his country, and for the very reason that he was a great tragic poet, belongs not to the literature of his country alone, but to the literature of the world. The Germans themselves have taught us this truth in relation to the tragic poets. In no part of the world is our Shakespeare more devoutly studied than in Germany; nowhere are his writings made the subject of profounder criticism, and the German versions of his dramas are absolute marvels of skilful translation.

We may therefore well say to the countrymen of Schiller: "Schiller is yours, but he is ours also. It was your country that gave him birth, but the people of all nations have made him their countryman by adoption. The influences of his genius have long since overflowed the limits within which his mother tongue is

spoken, and have colored the dramatic literature of the whole world. In some shape or other, with abatements, doubtless, from their original splendor and beauty, but still glorious and still powerful over the minds of men, his dramas have become the common property of mankind. His personages walk our stage, and, in the familiar speech of our firesides, utter the sentiments which he puts into their mouths. We tremble alternately with fear and hope; we are moved to tears of admiration, we are melted to tears of pity; it is Schiller who touches the master chord to which our hearts answer. He compels us to a painful sympathy with his Robber Chief; he makes us parties to the grand conspiracy of Fiesco, and willing lieges of Fiesco's gentle consort Leonora; we sorrow with him for the young, magnanimous, generous, unfortunate Don Carlos, and grieve scarcely less for the guileless and angelic Elizabeth; he dazzles us with the splendid ambition and awes us with the majestic fall of Wallenstein; he forces us to weep for Mary Stuart and for the Maid of Orleans; he thrills us with wonder and delight at the glorious and successful revolt of William Tell. Suffer us, then, to take part in the honors you pay to his memory, to shower the violets of spring upon his sepulchre, and twine it with the leaves of plants that wither not in the frost of winter."

We of this country, too, must honor Schiller as the poet of freedom. He was one of those who could agree with Cowper in saying that, if he could worship aught visible to the human eye or shaped by the human fancy, he would rear an altar to Liberty, and bring to it, at the beginning and close of every day, his offering of praise. Schiller began to write when our country was warring with Great Britain for its independence, and his genius attained the maturity of its strength just as we had made peace with our powerful adversary and stood upon the earth a full-grown nation. It was then that the poet was composing his noble drama of "Don Carlos," in which the Marquis of Posa is introduced as laying down to the tyrant, Philip of Spain, the great law of freedom. In the drama of the "Robbers," written in Schiller's youth, we are sensible of a fiery, vehement, destructive impatience with society, on account of the abuses which it permits; an enthusiasm of reform, almost without plan or object; but in his works composed afterward we find the true philosophy of reform calmly and clearly stated. The Marquis of Posa, in an

interview with Philip, tells him, at the peril of his life, truths which he never heard before; exhorts him to lay the foundations of his power in the happiness and affections of his people, by observing the democratic precept that no tie should fetter the citizen save respect for the rights of his brethren, as perfect and as sacred as his own, and prophesies the approaching advent of freedom, which, unfortunately, we are looking for still—that universal spring which should yet make young the nations of the earth.

Yet was Schiller no mad innovator. He saw that society required to be pruned, but did not desire that it should be uprooted—he would have it reformed, not laid waste. What was ancient and characteristic in its usages and ordinances, and therefore endeared to many, he would, where it was possible, improve and adapt to the present wants of mankind. I remember a passage in which his respect for those devices of form and usage, by which the men of a past age sought to curb and restrain the arbitrary power of their rulers, is beautifully illustrated. I quote it from the magnificent translation of "Wallenstein" made by Coleridge. Let me say here that I know of no English translation of a poem of any length which, a few passages excepted, so perfectly reproduces the original as this, and that, if the same hand had given us in our language the other dramas of this author, we should have had an English Schiller, worthy to be placed by the side of the German. "My son," says Octavio Piccolomini, addressing the youthful warrior Max,

"My son, of those old narrow ordinances  
Let us not hold too lightly. They are weights  
Of priceless value, which oppressed mankind  
Tied to the volatile will of the oppressor.  
For always formidable was the league  
And partnership of free power with free will."

And then, remarking that what slays and destroys goes directly to its mark, like the thunderbolt and the cannon-ball, shattering everything that lies in their way, he claims a beneficent circuitousness for those ancient ordinances which make so much of the machinery of society.

"My son, the road the human being travels,  
That on which Blessing comes and goes, doth follow  
The river's path, the valley's playful windings,  
Curves round the cornfield and the hill of vines,

Honoring the holy bounds of property,  
And thus, secure, though late, leads to its end."

Schiller perceived the great truth that old laws, if not watched, slide readily into abuses, and knew that constant revision and renovation are the necessary conditions of free political society; but he would have the revision made without forgetting that the men of the present day are of the same blood with those who lived before them. He would have the new garments fitted to the figure that must wear them, such as nature and circumstances have made it, even to its disproportions. He would have the old pass into the new by gradations which should avoid violence, and its concomitants, confusion and misery.

The last great dramatic work of Schiller—and whether it be not the grandest production of his genius I leave to others to judge—is founded on the most remarkable and beneficent political revolution which, previous to our own, the world had seen—an event the glory of which belongs solely to the Teutonic race—that ancient vindication of the great right of nationality and independent government, the revolt of Switzerland against the domination of Austria, which gave birth to a republic now venerable with the antiquity of five hundred years. He took a silent page from history, and, animating the personages of whom it speaks with the fiery life of his own spirit, and endowing them with his own superhuman eloquence, he formed it into a living protest against foreign dominion which yet rings throughout the world. Wherever there are generous hearts, wherever there are men who hold in reverence the rights of their fellow-men, wherever the love of country and the love of mankind coexist, Schiller's drama of "William Tell" stirs the blood like the sound of a trumpet.

It is not my purpose to dwell on the eminent literary qualities which make so large a part of the greatness of Schiller, and which have been more ably set forth by others than they can be by me. It is not for me to analyze his excellences as a dramatic poet; I will not speak of his beautiful and flowing lyrics, the despair of translators; I will say nothing of his noble histories, written like his dramas, for all mankind—for it was his maxim that he who wrote for one nation only proposed to himself a poor and narrow aim. These topics would require more time than you could give me, and I should shrink with dismay from

a task of such extent and magnitude. Let me close with observing that there is yet one other respect in which, as a member of the great world of letters, Schiller is entitled to the veneration of all mankind.

He was an earnest seeker after truth; a man whose moral nature revolted at every form of deceit; a noble example of what his countrymen mean when they claim the virtue of sincerity for the German race. He held with Akenside that

"—Truth and Good are one,  
And Beauty dwells in them";

that on the ascertainment and diffusion of truth the welfare of mankind largely depends, and that only mischief and misery can spring from delusions and prejudices, however enshrined in the respect of the world and made venerable by the lapse of years. The office of him who labored in the field of letters, he thought, was to make mankind better and happier by illustrating and enforcing the relations and duties of justice, beneficence, and brotherhood, by which men are bound to each other; and he never forgot this in anything which he wrote. Immortal honor to him whose vast powers were employed to so worthy a purpose, and may the next hundredth anniversary of his birth be celebrated with even a warmer enthusiasm than this!

## RALPH WALDO EMERSON

1803-1882

In many respects the greatest figure in American literature. Born of an old New England family in Boston, Massachusetts. Educated for the clergy at Harvard. For some years thereafter was a minister in Boston, but finally resigned his position because of the criticism to which his liberal notions were subjected. Then became a lecturer. His first book of essays, "Nature," published 1835, did not meet with success. It was only twenty years later that his genius was recognized. Meantime he had settled in Concord, where he became the center of the transcendental school of thought. His influence is patent in the works of such distinguished writers as Thoreau, Alcott, and Margaret Fuller. He himself was somewhat influenced by Thomas Carlyle, whom he met during one of his European tours and with whom he had a lifelong friendship. Among Emerson's works are the collections of essays entitled "The Conduct of Life" and "Society and Solitude," and a volume of poems.

### COMPENSATION

EVER since I was a boy I have wished to write a discourse on Compensation; for it seemed to me when very young that on this subject Life was ahead of theology and the people knew more than the preachers taught. The documents too from which the doctrine is to be drawn, charmed my fancy by their endless variety, and lay always before me, even in sleep; for they are the tools in our hands, the bread in our basket, the transactions of the street, the farm and the dwelling-house; the greetings, the relations, the debts and credits, the influence of character, the nature and endowment of all men. It seemed to me also that in it might be shown men a ray of divinity, the present action of the Soul of this world, clean from all vestige of tradition; and so the heart of man might be bathed by an inundation of eternal love, conversing with that which he knows was always and always must be, because it really is now. It appeared moreover that if this doctrine could be stated in terms with any resemblance to those bright intuitions in which this truth is sometimes revealed to us, it would be a star in many dark hours and crooked passages in our journey, that would not suffer us to lose our way.

I was lately confirmed in these desires by hearing a sermon

at church. The preacher, a man esteemed for his orthodoxy, unfolded in the ordinary manner the doctrine of the Last Judgment. He assumed that judgment is not executed in this world; that the wicked are successful; that the good are miserable; and then urged from reason and from Scripture a compensation to be made to both parties in the next life. No offense appeared to be taken by the congregation at this doctrine. As far as I could observe when the meeting broke up they separated without remark on the sermon.

Yet what was the import of this teaching? What did the preacher mean by saying that the good are miserable in the present life? Was it that houses and lands, offices, wine, horses, dress, luxury, are had by unprincipled men, whilst the saints are poor and despised; and that a compensation is to be made to these last hereafter, by giving them the like gratifications another day,—bank-stock and doubloons, venison and champagne? This must be the compensation intended; for what else? Is it that they are to have leave to pray and praise? to love and serve men? Why, that they can do now. The legitimate inference the disciple would draw was, "We are to have *such* a good time as the sinners have now";—or, to push it to its extreme import,—“You sin now, we shall sin by-and-by; we would sin now, if we could; not being successful we expect our revenge tomorrow.”

The fallacy lay in the immense concession that the bad are successful; that justice is not done now. The blindness of the preacher consisted in deferring to the base estimate of the market of what constitutes a manly success, instead of confronting and convicting the world from the truth; announcing the Presence of the Soul; the omnipotence of the Will; and so establishing the standard of good and ill, of success and falsehood, and summoning the dead to its present tribunal.

I find a similar base tone in the popular religious works of the day and the same doctrines assumed by the literary men when occasionally they treat the related topics. I think that our popular theology has gained in decorum, and not in principle, over the superstitions it has displaced. But men are better than this theology. Their daily life gives it the lie. Every ingenious and aspiring soul leaves the doctrine behind him in his own experience, and all men feel sometimes the falsehood which they cannot

demonstrate. For men are wiser than they know. That which they hear in schools and pulpits without afterthought, if said in conversation would probably be questioned in silence. If a man dogmatize in a mixed company on Providence and the divine laws, he is answered by a silence which conveys well enough to an observer the dissatisfaction of the hearer, but his incapacity to make his own statement.

I shall attempt in this and the following chapter to record some facts that indicate the path of the law of Compensation; happy beyond my expectation if I shall truly draw the smallest arc of this circle.

Polarity, or action and reaction, we meet in every part of nature; in darkness and light; in heat and cold; in the ebb and flow of waters; in male and female; in the inspiration and expiration of plants and animals; in the systole and diastole of the heart; in the undulations of fluids and of sound; in the centrifugal and centripetal gravity; in electricity, galvanism, and chemical affinity. Superinduce magnetism at one end of a needle, the opposite magnetism takes place at the other end. If the south attracts, the north repels. To empty here, you must condense there. An inevitable dualism bisects nature, so that each thing is a half, and suggests another thing to make it whole; as, spirit, matter; man, woman; subjective, objective; in, out; upper, under; motion, rest; yea, nay.

Whilst the world is thus dual, so is every one of its parts. The entire system of things gets represented in every particle. There is somewhat that resembles the ebb and flow of the sea, day and night, man and woman, in a single needle of the pine, in a kernel of corn, in each individual of every animal tribe. The reaction, so grand in the elements, is repeated within these small boundaries. For example, in the animal kingdom the physiologist had observed that no creatures are favorites, but a certain compensation balances every gift and every defect. A surplusage given to one part is paid out of a reduction from another part of the same creature. If the head and neck are enlarged, the trunk and extremities are cut short.

The theory of the mechanic forces is another example. What we gain in power is lost in time, and the converse. The periodic or compensating errors of the planets is another instance. The influences of climate and soil in political history are another. The



cold climate invigorates. The barren soil does not breed fevers, crocodiles, tigers, or scorpions.

The same dualism underlies the nature and condition of man. Every excess causes a defect; every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good. Every faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal penalty put on its abuse. It is to answer for its moderation with its life. For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For every thing you have missed, you have gained something else; and for every thing you gain, you lose something. If riches increase, they are increased that use them. If the gatherer gathers too much, nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest; swells the estate, but kills the owner. Nature hates monopolies and exceptions. The waves of the sea do not more speedily seek a level from their loftiest tossing than the varieties of condition tend to equalize themselves. There is always some levelling circumstance that puts down the overbearing, the strong, the rich, the fortunate, substantially on the same ground with all others. Is a man too strong and fierce for society and by temper and position a bad citizen,—a morose ruffian, with a dash of the pirate in him?—nature sends him a troop of pretty sons and daughters who are getting along in the dame's classes at the village school, and love and fear for them smooths his grim scowl to courtesy. Thus she contrives to intenerate the granite and felspar, takes the boar out and puts the lamb in and keeps her balance true.

The farmer imagines power and place are fine things. But the President has paid dear for his White House. It has commonly cost him all his peace, and the best of his manly attributes. To preserve for a short time so conspicuous an appearance before the world, he is content to eat dust before the real masters who stand erect behind the throne. Or do men desire the more substantial and permanent grandeur of genius? Neither has this an immunity. He who by force of will or of thought is great and overlooks thousands, has the responsibility of overlooking. With every influx of light comes new danger. Has he light? he must bear witness to the light, and always outrun that sympathy which gives him such keen satisfaction, by his fidelity to new revelations of the incessant soul. He must hate father and mother, wife and child. Has he all that the world loves and admires and covets?—he must cast behind him their admiration and afflict them by

faithfulness to his truth and become a byword and a hissing.

This Law writes the laws of cities and nations. It will not be balked of its end in the smallest iota. It is in vain to build or plot or combine against it. Things refuse to be mismanaged long. *Res nolunt diu male administrari*. Though no checks to a new evil appear, the checks exist, and will appear. If the government is cruel, the governor's life is not safe. If you tax too high, the revenue will yield nothing. If you make the criminal code sanguinary, juries will not convict. Nothing arbitrary, nothing artificial can endure. The true life and satisfactions of man seem to elude the utmost rigors or felicities of condition and to establish themselves with great indifference under all varieties of circumstance. Under all governments the influence of character remains the same,—in Turkey and New England about alike. Under the primeval despots of Egypt, history honestly confesses that man must have been as free as culture could make him.

These appearances indicate the fact that the universe is represented in every one of its particles. Every thing in nature contains all the powers of nature. Every thing is made of one hidden stuff; as the naturalist sees one type under every metamorphosis, and regards a horse as a running man, a fish as a swimming man, a bird as a flying man, a tree as a rooted man. Each new form repeats not only the main character of the type, but part for part all the details, all the aims, furtherances, hindrances, energies and whole system of every other. Every occupation, trade, art, transaction, is a compend of the world and a correlative of every other. Each one is an entire emblem of human life; of its good and ill, its trials, its enemies, its course and its end. And each one must somehow accommodate the whole man and recite all his destiny.

The world globes itself in a drop of dew. The microscope cannot find the animalcule which is less perfect for being little. Eyes, ears, taste, smell, motion, resistance, appetite, and organs of reproduction that take hold on eternity,—all find room to consist in the small creature. So do we put our life into every act. The true doctrine of omnipotence is that God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb. The value of the universe contrives to throw itself into every point. If the good is there, so is the evil; if the affinity, so the repulsion; if the force, so the limitation.

Thus is the universe alive. All things are moral. That soul which within us is a sentiment, outside of us is a law. We feel its inspirations; out there in history we can see its fatal strength. It is almighty. All Nature feels its grasp. "It is in the world, and the world was made by it." It is eternal but it enacts itself in time and space. Justice is not postponed. A perfect equity adjusts its balance in all parts of life. The dice of God are always loaded. The world looks like a multiplication-table, or a mathematical equation, which, turn it how you will, balances itself. Take what figure you will, its exact value, nor more nor less, still returns to you. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. What we call retribution is the universal necessity by which the whole appears wherever a part appears. If you see smoke, there must be fire. If you see a hand or a limb, you know that the trunk to which it belongs is there behind.

Every act rewards itself, or in other words integrates itself, in a twofold manner: first in the thing, or in real nature; and secondly in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Men call the circumstance the retribution. The casual retribution is in the thing and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding; it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time and so does not become distinct until after many years. The specific stripes may follow late after the offense, but they follow because they accompany it. Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end preëxists in the means, the fruit in the seed.

Whilst thus the world will be whole and refuses to be parted, we seek to act partially, to sunder, to appropriate; for example,—to gratify the senses we sever the pleasure of the senses from the needs of the character. The ingenuity of man has been dedicated to the solution of one problem,—how to detach the sensual sweet, the sensual strong, the sensual bright, &c., from the moral sweet, the moral deep, the moral fair; that is, again, to contrive to cut clean off this upper surface so thin as to leave it bottomless; to get a *one end*, without an *other end*. The soul says, Eat; the body would feast. The soul says, The man and

woman shall be one flesh and one soul; the body would join the flesh only. The soul says, Have dominion over all things to the ends of virtue; the body would have the power over things to its own ends.

The soul strives amain to live and work through all things. It would be the only fact. All things shall be added unto it,—power, pleasure, knowledge, beauty. The particular man aims to be somebody; to set up for himself; to truck and higgler for a private good; and, in particulars, to ride that he may ride; to dress that he may be dressed; to eat that he may eat; and to govern, that he may be seen. Men seek to be great; they would have offices, wealth, power, and fame. They think that to be great is to get only one side of nature,—the sweet, without the other side,—the bitter.

Steadily is this dividing and detaching counteracted. Up to this day it must be owned no projector has had the smallest success. The parted water re-unites behind our hand. Pleasure is taken out of pleasant things, profit out of profitable things, power out of strong things, the moment we seek to separate them from the whole. We can no more halve things and get the sensual good, by itself, than we can get an inside that shall have no outside, or a light without a shadow. "Drive out nature with a fork, she comes running back."

Life invests itself with inevitable conditions, which the unwise seek to dodge, which one and another brags that he does not know, brags that they do not touch him;—but the brag is on his lips, the conditions are in his soul. If he escapes them in one part they attack him in another more vital part. If he has escaped them in form and in the appearance, it is because he has resisted his life and fled from himself, and the retribution is so much death. So signal is the failure of all attempts to make this separation of the good from the tax, that the experiment would not be tried,—since to try it is to be mad,—but for the circumstance that when the disease began in the will, of rebellion and separation, the intellect is at once infected, so that the man ceases to see God whole in each object, but is able to see the sensual allurements of an object and not see the sensual hurt; he sees the mermaid's head but not the dragon's tail, and thinks he can cut off that which he would have from that which he would not have. "How secret art thou who dwellest in the highest heavens

in silence, O thou only great God, sprinkling with an unwearied providence certain penal blindnesses upon such as have unbridled desires!"

The human soul is true to these facts in the painting of fable, of history, of law, of proverbs, of conversation. It finds a tongue in literature unawares. Thus the Greeks called Jupiter, Supreme Mind; but having traditionally ascribed to him many base actions, they involuntarily made amends to Reason by tying up the hands of so bad a god. He is made as helpless as a king of England. Prometheus knows one secret which Jove must bargain for; Minerva, another. He cannot get his own thunders; Minerva keeps the key of them:

"Of all the gods, I only know the keys  
That ope the solid doors within whose vaults  
His thunders sleep."

A plain confession of the in-working of the All and of its moral aim. The Indian mythology ends in the same ethics; and indeed it would seem impossible for any fable to be invented and get any currency which was not moral. Aurora forgot to ask youth for her lover, and so though Tithonus is immortal, he is old. Achilles is not quite invulnerable; for Thetis held him by the heel when she dipped him in the Styx and the sacred waters did not wash that part. Siegfried, in the Nibelungen, is not quite immortal, for a leaf fell on his back whilst he was bathing in the Dragon's blood, and that spot which it covered is mortal. And so it always is. There is a crack in every thing God has made. Always it would seem there is this vindictive circumstance stealing in at unawares even into the wild poesy in which the human fancy attempted to make bold holiday and to shake itself free of the old laws,—this back-stroke, this kick of the gun, certifying that the law is fatal; that in nature nothing can be given, **all** things are sold.

This is that ancient doctrine of Nemesis, who keeps watch in the Universe and lets no offense go unchastised. The Furies they said are attendants on Justice, and if the sun in heaven should transgress his path they would punish him. The poets related that stone walls and iron swords and leathern thongs had an occult sympathy with the wrongs of their owners; that the belt which Ajax gave Hector dragged the Trojan hero over the field

at the wheels of the car of Achilles, and the sword which Hector gave Ajax was that on whose point Ajax fell. They recorded that when the Thasians erected a statue to Theogenes, a victor in the games, one of his rivals went to it by night and endeavored to throw it down by repeated blows, until at last he moved it from its pedestal and was crushed to death beneath its fall.

This voice of fable has in it somewhat divine. It came from thought above the will of the writer. That is the best part of each writer which has nothing private in it; that is the best part of each which he does not know; that which flowed out of his constitution and not from his too active invention; that which in the study of a single artist you might not easily find, but in the study of many you would abstract as the spirit of them all. Phidias it is not, but the work of a man in that early Hellenic world that I would know. The name and circumstance of Phidias, however convenient for history, embarrasses when we come to the highest criticism. We are to see that which man was tending to do in a given period, and was hindered, or, if you will, modified in doing, by the interfering volitions of Phidias, of Dante, of Shakespeare. the organ whereby man at the moment wrought.

Still more striking is the expression of this fact in the proverbs of all nations, which are always the literature of Reason, or the statements of an absolute truth without qualification. Proverbs, like the sacred books of each nation, are the sanctuary of the Intuitions. That which the droning world, chained to appearances, will not allow the realist to say in his own words, it will suffer him to say in proverbs without contradiction. And this law of laws, which the pulpit, the senate and the college deny, is hourly preached in all markets and all languages by flights of proverbs, whose teaching is as true and as omnipresent as that of birds and flies.

All things are double, one against another.—Tit for tat; an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; blood for blood; measure for measure; love for love.—Give, and it shall be given you.—He that watereth shall be watered himself.—What will you have? quoth God; pay for it and take it.—Nothing venture, nothing have.—Thou shalt be paid exactly for what thou hast done, no more, no less.—Who doth not work shall not eat.—Harm watch, harm catch.—Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them.—If you put a chain around the neck of a slave,

the other end fastens itself around your own.—Bad counsel confounds the adviser.—The devil is an ass.

It is thus written, because it is thus in life. Our action is overmastered and characterized above our will by the law of nature. We aim at a petty end quite aside from the public good, but our act arranges itself by irresistible magnetism in a line with the poles of the world.

A man cannot speak but he judges himself. With his will or against his will he draws his portrait to the eye of his companions by every word. Every opinion reacts on him who utters it. It is a thread-ball thrown at a mark, but the other end remains in the thrower's bag. Or, rather, it is a harpoon thrown at the whale, unwinding, as it flies, a coil of cord in a boat, and, if the harpoon is not good, or not well thrown, it will go nigh to cut the steersman in twain or to sink the boat.

You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong. "No man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him," said Burke. The exclusive in fashionable life does not see that he excludes himself from enjoyment, in the attempt to appropriate it. The exclusionist in religion does not see that he shuts the door of heaven on himself, in striving to shut out others. Treat men as pawns and nine-pins and you shall suffer as well as they. If you leave out their heart, you shall lose your own. The senses would make things of all persons; of women, of children, of the poor. The vulgar proverb, "I will get it from his purse or get it from his skin," is sound philosophy.

All infractions of love and equity in our social relations are speedily punished. They are punished by Fear. Whilst I stand in simple relations to my fellow-man, I have no displeasure in meeting him. We meet as water meets water, or as two currents of air mix, with perfect diffusion and interpenetration of nature. But as soon as there is any departure from simplicity and attempt at halfness, or good for me that is not good for him, my neighbor feels the wrong; he shrinks from me as far as I have shrunk from him; his eyes no longer seek mine; there is war between us; there is hate in him and fear in me.

All the old abuses in society, the great and universal and the petty and particular, all unjust accumulations of property and power, are avenged in the same manner. Fear is an instructor of great sagacity and the herald of all revolutions. One thing

he always teaches, that there is rottenness where he appears. He is a carrion crow, and though you see not well what he hovers for, there is death somewhere. Our property is timid, our laws are timid, our cultivated classes are timid. Fear for ages has boded and mowed and gibbered over government and property. That obscene bird is not there for nothing. He indicates great wrongs which must be revised.

Of the like nature is that expectation of change which instantly follows the suspension of our voluntary activity. The terror of cloudless noon, the emerald of Polycrates, the awe of prosperity, the instinct which leads every generous soul to impose on itself tasks of a noble asceticism and vicarious virtue, are the tremblings of the balance of justice through the heart and mind of man.

Experienced men of the world know very well that it is best to pay scot and lot as they go along, and that a man often pays dear for a small frugality. The borrower runs in his own debt. Has a man gained any thing who has received a hundred favors and rendered none? Has he gained by borrowing, through indolence or cunning, his neighbor's wares, or horses, or money? There arises on the deed the instant acknowledgment of benefit on the one part and of debt on the other; that is, of superiority and inferiority. The transaction remains in the memory of himself and his neighbor; and every new transaction alters according to its nature their relation to each other. He may soon come to see that he had better have broken his own bones than to have ridden in his neighbor's coach, and that "the highest price he can pay for a thing is to ask for it."

A wise man will extend this lesson to all parts of life, and know that it is always the part of prudence to face every claimant and pay every just demand on your time, your talents, or your heart. Always pay; for first or last you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt. If you are wise you will dread a prosperity which only loads you with more. Benefit is the end of nature. But for every benefit which you receive, a tax is levied. He is great who confers the most benefits. He is base,—and that is the one base thing in the universe,—to receive favors and render none. In the order of nature we cannot render benefits to those from whom



we receive them, or only seldom. But the benefit we receive must be rendered again, line for line, deed for deed, cent for cent, to somebody. Beware of too much good staying in your hand. It will fast corrupt and worm worms. Pay it away quickly in some sort.

Labor is watched over by the same pitiless laws. Cheapest, say the prudent, is the dearest labor. What we buy in a broom, a mat, a wagon, a knife, is some application of good sense to a common want. It is best to pay in your land a skillful gardener, or to buy good sense applied to gardening; in your sailor, good sense applied to navigation; in the house, good sense applied to cooking, sewing, serving; in your agent, good sense applied to accounts and affairs. So do you multiply your presence, or spread yourself throughout your estate. But because of the dual constitution of things, in labor as in life there can be no cheating. The thief steals from himself. The swindler swindles himself. For the real price of labor is knowledge and virtue, whereof wealth and credit are signs. These signs, like paper money, may be counterfeited or stolen, but that which they represent, namely, knowledge and virtue, cannot be counterfeited or stolen. These ends of labor cannot be answered but by real exertions of the mind, and in obedience to pure motives. The cheat, the defaulter, the gambler, cannot extort the benefit, cannot extort the knowledge of material and moral nature which his honest care and pains yield to the operative. The law of nature is, Do the thing, and you shall have the power; but they who do not the thing have not the power.

Human labor, through all its forms, from the sharpening of a stake to the construction of a city or an epic, is one immense illustration of the perfect compensation of the universe. Everywhere and always this law is sublime. The absolute balance of Give and Take, the doctrine that every thing has its price, and if that price is not paid, not that thing but something else is obtained, and that it is impossible to get anything without its price, is not less sublime in the columns of a ledger than in the budgets of states, in the laws of light and darkness, in all the action and reaction of nature. I cannot doubt that the high laws which each man sees ever implicated in those processes with which he is conversant, the stern ethics which sparkle on his

chisel-edge, which are measured out by his plumb and foot-rule, which stand as manifest in the footing of the shop bill as in the history of a state,—do recommend to him his trade, and though seldom named, exalt his business to his imagination.

The league between virtue and nature engages all things to assume a hostile front to vice. The beautiful laws and substances of the world persecute and whip the traitor. He finds that things are arranged for truth and benefit, but there is no den in the wide world to hide a rogue. Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass. There is no such thing as concealment. Commit a crime, and it seems as if a coat of snow fell on the ground, such as reveals in the woods the track of every partridge and fox and squirrel and mole. You cannot recall the spoken word, you cannot wipe out the foot-track, you cannot draw up the ladder, so as to leave no inlet or clew. Always some damning circumstance transpires. The laws and substances of nature, water, snow, wind, gravitation, become penalties to the thief.

On the other hand the law holds with equal sureness for all right action. Love, and you shall be loved. All love is mathematically just, as much as the two sides of an algebraic equation. The good man has absolute good, which like fire turns every thing to its own nature, so that you cannot do him any harm; but as the royal armies sent against Napoleon, when he approached cast down their colors and from enemies became friends, so do disasters of all kinds, as sickness, offense, poverty, prove benefactors.

“Winds blow and waters roll  
Strength to the brave and power and deity,  
Yet in themselves are nothing.”

The good are befriended even by weakness and defect. As no man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man had ever a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him. The stag in the fable admired his horns and blamed his feet, but when the hunter came, his feet saved him, and afterwards, caught in the thicket, his horns destroyed him. Every man in his lifetime needs to thank his faults. As no man thoroughly understands a truth until first he has contended against it, so no man has a thorough acquaintance with the hindrances or talents of men until he has suffered from the one and seen the triumph

of the other over his own want of the same. Has he a defect of temper that unfits him to live in society? Thereby he is driven to entertain himself alone and acquire habits of self-help; and thus, like the wounded oyster, he mends his shell with pearl.

Our strength grows out of our weakness. Not until we are pricked and stung and sorely shot at, awakens the indignation which arms itself with secret forces. A great man is always willing to be little. Whilst he sits on the cushions of advantages, he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something; he has been put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of conceit; has got moderation and real skill. The wise man always throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point. The wound cicatrizes and falls off from him like a dead skin and when they would triumph, lo! he has passed on invulnerable. Blame is safer than praise. I hate to be defended in a newspaper. As long as all that is said is said against me, I feel a certain assurance of success. But as soon as honeyed words of praise are spoken for me I feel as one that lies unprotected before his enemies. In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor. As the Sandwich Islander believes that the strength and valor of the enemy he kills passes into himself, so we gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

The same guards which protect us from disaster, defect and enmity, defend us, if we will, from selfishness and fraud. Bolts and bars are not the best of our institutions, nor is shrewdness in trade a mark of wisdom. Men suffer all their life long under the foolish superstition that they can be cheated. But it is as impossible for a man to be cheated by any one but himself, as for a thing to be and not to be at the same time. There is a third silent party to all our bargains. The nature and soul of things takes on itself the guaranty of the fulfillment of every contract, so that honest service cannot come to loss. If you serve an ungrateful master, serve him the more. Put God in your debt. Every stroke shall be repaid. The longer the payment is withholden, the better for you; for compound interest on compound interest is the rate and usage of this exchequer.

The history of persecution is a history of endeavors to cheat

nature, to make water run up hill, to twist a rope of sand. It makes no difference whether the actors be many or one, a tyrant or a mob. A mob is a society of bodies voluntarily bereaving themselves of reason and traversing its work. The mob is man voluntarily descending to the nature of the beast. Its fit hour of activity is night. Its actions are insane, like its whole constitution. It persecutes a principle; it would whip a right; it would tar and feather justice, by inflicting fire and outrage upon the houses and persons of those who have these. It resembles the prank of boys who run with fire-engines to put out the ruddy aurora streaming to the stars. The inviolate spirit turns their spite against the wrongdoers. The martyr cannot be dishonored. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of flame; every prison a more illustrious abode; every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or sponged word reverberates through the earth from side to side. The minds of men are at last aroused; reason looks out and justifies her own and malice finds all her work in vain. It is the whipper who is whipped and the tyrant who is undone.

Thus do all things preach the indifferency of circumstances. The man is all. Every thing has two sides, a good and an evil. Every advantage has its tax. I learn to be content. But the doctrine of compensation is not the doctrine of indifferency. The thoughtless say, on hearing these representations,—What boots it to do well? there is one event to good and evil; if I gain any good I must pay for it; if I lose any good I gain some other; all actions are indifferent.

There is a deeper fact in the soul than compensation, to-wit, its own nature. The soul is not a compensation, but a life. The soul is. Under all this running sea of circumstance, whose waters ebb and flow with perfect balance, lies the aboriginal abyss of real Being. Existence, or God, is not a relation or a part, but the whole. Being is the vast affirmative, excluding negation, self-balanced, and swallowing up all relations, parts and times within itself. Nature, truth, virtue, are the influx from thence. Vice is the absence or departure of the same. Nothing, Falsehood, may indeed stand as the great Night or shade on which as a back-ground the living universe paints itself forth; but no fact is begotten by it; it cannot work, for it is not. It cannot work

any good; it cannot work any harm. It is harm inasmuch as it is worse not to be than to be.

We feel defrauded of the retribution due to evil acts, because the criminal adheres to his vice and contumacy and does not come to a crisis or judgment anywhere in visible nature. There is no stunning confutation of his nonsense before men and angels. Has he therefore outwitted the law? Inasmuch as he carries the malignity and the lie with him he so far deceases from nature. In some manner there will be a demonstration of the wrong to the understanding also; but, should we not see it, this deadly deduction makes square the eternal account.

Neither can it be said, on the other hand, that the gain of rectitude must be bought by any loss. There is no penalty to virtue; no penalty to wisdom; they are proper additions of being. In a virtuous action I properly *am*; in a virtuous act I add to the world; I plant into deserts conquered from Chaos and Nothing and see the darkness receding on the limits of the horizon. There can be no excess to love, none to knowledge, none to beauty, when these attributes are considered in the purest sense. The soul refuses all limits. It affirms in man always an Optimism, never a Pessimism.

His life is a progress, and not a station. His instinct is trust. Our instinct uses "more" and "less" in application to man, always of the *presence of the soul*, and not of its absence; the brave man is greater than the coward; the true, the benevolent, the wise, is more a man and not less, than the fool and knave. There is therefore no tax on the good of virtue, for that is the incoming of God himself, or absolute existence, without any comparative. All external good has its tax, and if it came without desert or sweat, has no root in me, and the next wind will blow it away. But all the good of nature is the soul's, and may be had if paid for in nature's lawful coin, that is, by labor which the heart and the head allow. I no longer wish to meet a good I do not earn, for example, to find a pot of buried gold, knowing that it brings with it new responsibility. I do not wish more external goods,—neither possessions, nor honors, nor powers, nor persons. The gain is apparent; the tax is certain. But there is no tax on the knowledge that the compensation exists and that it is not desirable

to dig up treasure. Herein I rejoice with a serene eternal peace. I contract the boundaries of possible mischief. I learn the wisdom of St. Bernard, "Nothing can work me damage except myself; the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault."

In the nature of the soul is the compensation for the inequalities of condition. The radical tragedy of nature seems to be the distinction of More and Less. How can Less not feel the pain; how not feel indignation or malevolence towards More? Look at those who have less faculty, and one feels sad and knows not well what to make of it. Almost he shuns their eye; he fears they will upbraid God. What should they do? It seems a great injustice. But see the facts nearly and these mountainous inequalities vanish. Love reduces them as the sun melts the iceberg in the sea. The heart and soul of all men being one, this bitterness of *His* and *Mine* ceases. His is mine. I am my brother and my brother is me. If I feel overshadowed and outdone by great neighbors, I can yet love; I can still receive; and he that loveth maketh his own the grandeur he loves. Thereby I make the discovery that my brother is my guardian, acting for me with the friendliest designs, and the estate I so admired and envied is my own. It is the eternal nature of the soul to appropriate and make all things its own. Jesus and Shakespeare are fragments of the soul, and by love I conquer and incorporate them in my own conscious domain. His virtue,—is not that mine? His wit,—if it cannot be made mine, it is not wit.

Such also is the natural history of calamity. The changes which break up at short intervals the prosperity of men are advertisements of a nature whose law is growth. Evermore it is the order of nature to grow, and every soul is by this intrinsic necessity quitting its whole system of things, its friends and home and laws and faith, as the shellfish crawls out of its beautiful but stony case, because it no longer admits of its growth, and slowly forms a new house. In proportion to the vigor of the individual these revolutions are frequent, until in some happier mind they are incessant and all worldly relations hang very loosely about him, becoming as it were a transparent fluid membrane through which the living form is always seen, and not, as in most men, an indurated heterogeneous fabric of many dates and of no

settled character, in which the man is imprisoned. Then there can be enlargement, and the man of today scarcely recognizes the man of yesterday. And such should be the outward biography of man in time, a putting off of dead circumstances day by day, as he renews his raiment day by day. But to us, in our lapsed estate, resting, not advancing, resisting, not coöperating with the divine expansion, this growth comes by shocks.

We cannot part with our friends. We cannot let our angels go. We do not see that they only go out that archangels may come in. We are idolators of the old. We do not believe in the riches of the soul, in its proper eternity and omnipresence. We do not believe there is any force in today to rival or re-create that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent where once we had bread and shelter and organs, nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover, and nerve us again. We cannot again find aught so dear, so sweet, so graceful. But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, "Up and onward forevermore!" We cannot stay amid the ruins. Neither will we rely on the New; and so we walk ever with reverted eyes, like those monsters who look backwards.

And yet the compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time. A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts. The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius; for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or a household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character. It permits or constrains the formation of new acquaintances and the reception of new influences that prove of the first importance to the next years; and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden-flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener is made the banian of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to widen neighborhoods of men.

## RALPH WALDO EMERSON

## THE OVER-SOUL

THERE is a difference between one and another hour of life in their authority and subsequent effect. Our faith comes in moments; our vice is habitual. Yet there is a depth in those brief moments which constrains us to ascribe more reality to them than to all other experiences. For this reason the argument which is always forthcoming to silence those who conceive extraordinary hopes of man, namely, the appeal to experience, is forever invalid and vain. A mightier hope abolishes despair. We give up the past to the objector, and yet we hope. He must explain this hope. We grant that human life is mean, but how did we find out that it was mean? What is the ground of this uneasiness of ours; of this old discontent? What is the universal sense of want and ignorance, but the fine innuendo by which the great soul makes its enormous claim? Why do men feel that the natural history of man has never been written, but always he is leaving behind what you have said of him, and it becomes old, and books of metaphysics worthless? The philosophy of six thousand years has not searched the chambers and magazines of the soul. In its experiments there has always remained, in the last analysis, a residuum it could not resolve. Man is a stream whose source is hidden. Always our being is descending into us from we know not whence. The most exact calculator has no prescience that somewhat incalculable may not balk the very next moment. I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher origin for events than the will I call mine.

As with events, so it is with thoughts. When I watch that flowing river, which, out of regions I see not, pours for a season its streams into me—I see that I am a pensioner—not a cause but a surprised spectator of this ethereal water; that I desire and look up and put myself in the attitude of reception, but from some alien energy the visions come.

The Supreme Critic on all the errors of the past and the present, and the only prophet of that which must be, is that great nature in which we rest as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere; that Unity, that Over-soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other; that common heart of which all sincere conversation is



the worship, to which all right action is submission; that overpowering reality which confutes our tricks and talents, and constrains every one to pass for what he is, and to speak from his character and not from his tongue, and which evermore tends to pass into our thought and hand and become wisdom and virtue and power and beauty. We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE. And this deep power in which we exist and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one. We see the world piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree; but the whole, of which these are the shining parts, is the soul. Only by the vision of that Wisdom can the horoscope of the ages be read, and by falling back on our better thoughts, by yielding to the spirit of prophecy which is innate in every man that we can know what it saith. Every man's words who speaks from that life must sound vain to those who do not dwell in the same thought on their own part. I dare not speak for it. My words do not carry its august sense; they fall short and cold. Only itself can inspire whom it will, and behold! their speech shall be lyrical, and sweet, and universal as the rising of the wind. Yet I desire, even by profane words, if sacred I may not use, to indicate the heaven of this deity and to report what hints I have collected of the transcendant simplicity and energy of the Highest Law.

If we consider what happens in conversation, in reveries, in remorse, in times of passion, in surprises, in the instructions of dreams, wherein often we see ourselves in masquerade—the droll disguises only magnifying and enhancing a real element and forcing it on our distinct notice—we shall catch many hints that will broaden and lighten into knowledge of the secret of nature. All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison—but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty, but a light; is not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and the will;—is the vast background of our being, in which they lie—

an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed. From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all. A man is the façade of a temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide. What we commonly call a man, the eating, drinking, planting, counting man, does not, as we know him, represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect, but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action, would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love. And the blindness of the intellect begins when it would be something of itself. The weakness of the will begins when the individual would be something of himself. All reform aims in some one particular to let the great soul have its way through us; in other words, to engage us to obey.

Of this pure nature every man is at some time sensible. Language cannot paint it with his colors. It is too subtle. It is undefinable, unmeasurable; but we know that it pervades and contains us. We know that all spiritual being is in man. A wise old proverb says, "God comes to see us without bell;" that is, as there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul, where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to all the attributes of God. Justice we see and know, Love, Freedom, Power. These natures no man ever got above, but always they tower over us, and most in the moment when our interests tempt us to wound them.

The sovereignty of this nature whereof we speak is made known by its independency of those limitations which circumscribe us on every hand. The soul circumscribeth all things. As I have said, it contradicts all experience. In like manner it abolishes time and space. The influence of the senses has in most men overpowered the mind to that degree that the walls of time and space have come to look solid, real and insurmountable; and to speak with levity of these limits is, in the world, the sign of insanity. Yet time and space are but inverse measures of the force of the soul. A man is capable of abolishing them both. The spirit sports with time—.

"Can crowd eternity into an hour,  
Or stretch an hour to eternity."

We are often made to feel that there is another youth and age than that which is measured from the year of our natural birth. Some thoughts always find us young, and keep us so. Such a thought is the love of the universal and eternal beauty. Every man parts from that contemplation with the feeling that it rather belongs to ages than to mortal life. The least activity of the intellectual powers redeems us in a degree from the influences of time. In sickness, in languor, give us a strain of poetry or a profound sentence, and we are refreshed; or produce a volume of Plato or Shakespeare, or remind us of their names, and instantly we come into a feeling of longevity. See how the deep divine thought demolishes centuries and millenniums, and makes itself present through all ages. Is the teaching of Christ less effective now than it was when first his mouth was opened? The emphasis of facts and persons to my soul has nothing to do with time. And so always the soul's scale is one; the scale of the senses and the understanding is another. Before the great revelations of the soul, Time, Space and Nature shrink away. In common speech we refer all things to time, as we habitually refer the immensely sundered stars to one concave sphere. And so we say that the Judgment is distant or near, that the Millennium approaches, that a day of certain political, moral, social reforms is at hand, and the like, when we mean that in the nature of things one of the facts we contemplate is external and fugitive, and the other is permanent and connate with the soul. The things we now esteem fixed shall, one by one, detach themselves like ripe fruit from our experience, and fall. The wind shall blow them none knows whither. The landscape, the figures, Boston, London, are facts as fugitive as any institution past, or any whiff of mist or smoke, and so is society, and so is the world. The soul looketh steadily fowards, creating a world alway before her, leaving worlds alway behind her. She has no dates, nor rites, nor persons, nor specialties, nor men. The soul knows only the soul; all else is idle weeds for her wearing.

After its own law and not by arithmetic is the rate of its progress to be computed. The soul's advances are not made by gradation, such as can be represented by motion in a straight line, but rather by ascension of state, such as can be represented

by metamorphis—from the egg to the worm, from the worm to the fly. The growths of genius are of a certain *total* character, that does not advance the elect individual first over John, then Adam, then Richard, and give to each the pain of discovered inferiority, but by every throes of growth the man expands there where he works, passing, at each pulsation, classes, populations, of men. With each divine impulse the mind rends the thin rinds of the visible and finite, and comes out into eternity, and inspires and expires its air. It converses with truths that have always been spoken in the world, and becomes conscious of a closer sympathy with Zeno and Arrian than with persons in the house.

This is the law of moral and of mental gain. The simple rise as by specific levity not into a particular virtue, but into the region of all the virtues. They are in the spirit which contains them all. The soul is superior to all the particulars of merit. The soul requires purity, but purity is not it; requires justice, but justice is not that; requires beneficence, but is somewhat better: so that there is a kind of descent and accommodation felt when we leave speaking of moral nature to urge a virtue which it enjoins. For, to the soul in her pure action all the virtues are natural, and not painfully acquired. Speak to his heart, and the man becomes suddenly virtuous.

Within the same sentiment is the germ of intellectual growth, which obeys the same law. Those who are capable of humility, of justice, of love, of aspiration, are already on a platform that commands the sciences and arts, speech and poetry, action and grace. For whoso dwells in this moral beatitude does already anticipate those special powers which men prize so highly; just as love does justice to all the gifts of the object beloved. The lover has no talent, no skill, which passes for quite nothing with his enamored maiden, however little she may possess of related faculty; and the heart which abandons itself to the Supreme Mind finds itself related to all its works, and will travel a royal road to particular knowledges and powers. For in ascending to this primary and aboriginal sentiment we have come from our remote station on the circumference instantaneously to the center of the world, where, as in the closet of God, we see causes, and anticipate the universe, which is but a slow effect.

One mode of the divine teaching is the incarnation of the

spirit in a form—in forms, like my own. I live in society ; with persons who answer to thoughts in my own mind, or outwardly express a certain obedience to the great instincts to which I live. I see its presence to them. I am certified of a common nature ; and so these other souls, these separated selves, draw me as nothing else can. They stir in me the new emotions we call passion ; of love, hatred, fear, admiration, pity ; thence come conversation, competition, persuasion, cities and war. Persons are supplementary to the primary teaching of the soul. In youth we are mad for persons. Childhood and youth see all the world in them. But the larger experience of man discovers the identical nature appearing through them all. Persons themselves acquaint us with the impersonal. In all conversation between two persons tacit reference is made, as to a third party, to a common nature. That third party or common nature is not social ; it is impersonal ; is God. And so in groups where debate is earnest, and especially on great questions of thought, the company become aware of their unity ; aware that the thought rises to an equal height in all bosoms, that all have a spiritual property in what was said, as well as the sayer. They all wax wiser than they were. It arches over them like a temple, this unity of thought in which every heart beats with nobler sense of power and duty, and thinks and acts with unusual solemnity. All are conscious of attaining to a higher self-possession. It shines for all. There is a certain wisdom of humanity which is common to the greatest men with the lowest, and which our ordinary education often labors to silence and obstruct. The mind is one, and the best minds, who love truth for its own sake, think much less of property in truth. Thankfully they accept it everywhere, and do not label or stamp it with any man's name, for it is theirs long beforehand. It is theirs from eternity. The learned and the studious of thought have no monopoly of wisdom. Their violence of direction in some degree disqualifies them to think truly. We owe many valuable observations to people who are not very acute or profound, and who say the thing without effort which we want and have long been hunting in vain. The action of the soul is oftener in that which is felt and left unsaid than in that which is said in any conversation. It broods over every society, and they unconsciously seek for it in each other. We know better than we do. We do not yet possess ourselves, and we know at the same time

that we are much more. I feel the same truth how often in my trivial conversation with my neighbors, that somewhat higher in each of us overlooks this by-play, and Jove nods to Jove from behind each of us.

Men descend to meet. In their habitual and mean service to the world, for which they forsake their native nobleness, they resemble those Arabian sheiks who dwell in mean houses and effect an external poverty, to escape the rapacity of the Pacha, and reserve all their display of wealth for their interior and guarded retirements.

As it is present in all persons, so it is in every period of life. It is adult already in the infant man. In my dealing with my child, my Latin and Greek, my accomplishments and my money stead me nothing. They are all lost on him; but as much soul as I have, avails. If I am merely wilful, he gives me a Roland for an Oliver, sets his will against mine, one for one, and leaves me, if I please, the degradation of beating him by my superiority of strength. But if I renounce my will and act for the soul, setting that up as umpire between us two, out of his young eyes looks the same soul; he reveres and loves with me.

The soul is the perceiver and revealer of truth. We know truth when we see it, let skeptic and scoffer say what they choose. Foolish people ask you, when you have spoken what they do not wish to hear, "How do you know it is truth, and not an error of your own?" We know truth when we see it, from opinion, as we know when we are awake that we are awake. It was a grand sentence of Emanuel Swedenborg, which would alone indicate the greatness of that man's perception—"It is no proof of a man's understanding to be able to affirm whatever he pleases; but to be able to discern that what is true is true, and that what is false is false, this is the mark and character of intelligence." In the book I read, the good thought returns to me, as every truth will, the image of the whole soul. To the bad thought which I find in it, the same soul becomes a discerning, separating sword, and lops it away. We are wiser than we know. If we will not interfere with our thought, but will act entirely, or see how the thing stands in God, we know the particular thing, and every thing, and every man. For the Maker of all things and all persons stands behind us and casts his dread omniscience through us over things.

But beyond this recognition of its own in particular passages of the individual's experience, it also reveals truth. And here we should seek to reinforce ourselves by its very presence, and to speak with a worthier, loftier strain of that advent. For the soul's communication of truth is the highest event in nature, for it then does not give somewhat from itself, but it gives itself, or passes into and becomes that man whom it enlightens; or, in proportion to that truth he receives, it takes him to itself.

We distinguish the announcements of the soul, its manifestations of its own nature, by the term *Revelation*. These are always attended by the emotion of the sublime. For this communication is an influx of the Divine mind into our mind. It is an ebb of the individual rivulet before the flowing surges of the sea of life. Every distinct apprehension of this central commandment agitates men with awe and delight. A thrill passes through all men at the reception of new truth, or at the performance of a great action, which comes out of the heart of nature. In these communications the power to see is not separated from the will to do, but the insight proceeds from obedience, and the obedience proceeds from a joyful perception. Every moment when the individual feels himself invaded by it, is memorable. Always, I believe, by the necessity of our constitution a certain enthusiasm attends the individual's consciousness of that divine presence. The character and duration of this enthusiasm varies with the state of the individual, from an ecstasy and trance and prophetic inspiration—which is its rarer appearance, to the faintest glow of virtuous emotion, in which form it warms, like our household fires, all the families and associations of men, and makes society possible. A certain tendency to insanity has always attended the opening of the religious sense in men, as if "blasted with excess of light." The trances of Socrates; the "union" of Plotinus; the vision of Porphyry; the conversion of Paul; the aurora of Behmen; the convulsions of George Fox and his Quakers; the illumination of Swedenborg, are of this kind. What was in the case of these remarkable persons a ravishment, has, in innumerable instances in common life, been exhibited in less striking manner. Everywhere the history of religion betrays a tendency to enthusiasm. The rapture of the Moravian and Quietest; the opening of the internal sense of the Word, in the language of the New Jerusalem

Church; the revival of the Calvinistic churches; the experiences of the Methodists, are varying forms of that shudder of awe and delight with which the individual soul always mingles with the universal soul.

The nature of these revelations is always the same; they are perceptions of the absolute law. They are solutions of the soul's own questions. They do not answer the question which the understanding asks. The soul answers never by words, but by the thing itself that is inquired after.

Revelation is the disclosure of the soul. The popular notion of a revelation is, that it is a telling of fortunes. In past oracles of the soul the understanding seeks to find answers to sensual questions, and undertakes to tell from God how long men shall exist, what their hands shall do and who shall be their company, adding even names and dates and places. But we must pick no locks. We must check this low curiosity. An answer in words is delusive; it is really no answer to the questions you ask. Do not require a description of the countries towards which you sail. The description does not describe them to you, and tomorrow you arrive there and know them by inhabiting them. Men ask of the immortality of the soul, and the employments of heaven and the state of the sinner, and so forth. They even dream that Jesus has left replies to precisely these interrogatories. Never a moment did that sublime spirit speak in their *patois*. To truth, justice, love, the attributes of the soul, the idea of immutableness is essentially associated. Jesus, living in these moral sentiments, heedless of sensual fortunes, heeding only the manifestations of these, never made the separation of the idea of duration from the essence of these attributes, never uttered a syllable concerning the duration of the soul. It was left to his disciples to sever duration from the moral elements, and to teach the immortality of the soul as a doctrine, and maintain it by evidences. The moment the doctrine of the immortality is separately taught, man is already fallen. In the flowing of love, in the adoration of humility, there is no question of continuance. No inspired man ever asks this question or condescends to these evidences. For the soul is true to itself, and the man in whom it is shed abroad cannot wander from the present, which is infinite, to a future which would be finite.

These questions which we lust to ask about the future are a



confession of sin. God has no answer for them. No answer in words can reply to a question of things. It is not in an arbitrary "decree of God," but in the nature of man, that a veil shuts down on the facts of tomorrow: for the soul will not have us read any other cipher but that of cause and effect. By this veil which curtains events it instructs the children of men to live in today. The only mode of obtaining an answer to these questions of the senses is to forego all low curiosity, and, accepting the tide of being which floats us into the secret of nature, work and live, work and live, and all unawares the advancing soul has built and forged for itself a new condition, and the question and the answer are one.

Thus is the soul the perceiver and revealer of truth. By the same fire, serene, impersonal, perfect, which burns until it shall dissolve all things into the waves and surges of an ocean of light—we see and know each other, and what spirit each is of. Who can tell the grounds of his knowledge of the character of the several individuals in his circle of friends? No man. Yet their acts and words do not disappoint him. In that man, though he knew no ill of him, he put no trust. In that other, though they had seldom met, authentic signs had yet passed, to signify that he might be trusted as one who had an interest in his own character. We know each other very well—which of us has been just to himself and whether that which we teach or behold is only an aspiration or is our honest effort also.

We are all discerners of spirits. That diagnosis lies aloft in our life or unconscious power, not in the understanding. The whole intercourse of society, its trade, its religion, its friendships, its quarrels—is one wide judicial investigation of character. In full court, or in small committee, or confronted face to face, accuser and accused, men offer themselves to be judged. Against their will they exhibit those decisive trifles by which character is read. But who judges? and what? Not our understanding. We do not read them by learning or craft. No; the wisdom of the wise man consists herein, that he does not judge them; he lets them judge themselves and merely reads and records their own verdict.

By virtue of this inevitable nature, private will is overpowered, and, maugre our efforts or our imperfections, your genius will speak from you, and mine from me. That which we are, we

shall teach, not voluntarily but involuntarily. Thoughts come into our minds through avenues which we never left open, and thoughts go out of our minds through avenues which we never voluntarily opened. Character teaches over our head. The infallible index of true progress is found in the tone the man takes. Neither his age, nor his breeding, nor company, nor books, nor actions, nor talents, nor all together can hinder him from being deferential to a higher spirit than his own. If he have not found his home in God, his manners, his forms of speech, the turn of his sentences, the build, shall I say, of all his opinions will involuntarily confess it, let him brave it out how he will. If he have found his center, the Deity will shine through him, through all the disguises of ignorance, of ungenial temperament, of unfavorable circumstance. The tone of seeking is one, and the tone of having is another.

The great distinction between teachers sacred or literary; between poets like Herbert, and poets like Pope; between philosophers like Spinoza, Kant and Coleridge—and philosophers like Locke, Paley, Mackintosh and Stewart; between men of the world who are reckoned accomplished talkers, and here and there a fervent mystic, prophesying half-insane under the infinitude of his thought, is that one class speak *from within*, or from experience, as parties and possessors of the fact; and the other class *from without*, as spectators merely, or perhaps as acquainted with the fact on the evidence of third persons. It is of no use to preach to me from without. I can do that too easily myself. Jesus speaks always from within, and in a degree that transcends all others. In that is the miracle. That includes the miracle. My soul believes beforehand that it ought so to be. All men stand continually in the expectation of the appearance of such a teacher. But if a man do not speak from within the veil, where the word is one with that it tells of, let him lowly confess it.

The same Omniscience flows into the intellect and makes what we call genius. Much of the wisdom of the world is not wisdom, and the most illuminated class of men are no doubt superior to literary fame, and are not writers. Among the multitude of scholars and authors we feel no hallowing presence; we are sensible of a knack and skill rather than of inspiration; they have a light and know not whence it comes and call it their own: their talent is some exaggerated faculty, some overgrown mem-

ber, so that their strength is a disease. In these instances the intellectual gifts do not make the impression of virtue, but almost of vice; and we feel that a man's talents stand in the way of his advancement in truth. But genius is religious. It is a larger imbibing of the common heart. It is not anomalous, but more like and not less like other men. There is in all great poets a wisdom of humanity which is superior to any talents they exercise. The author, the wit, the partisan, the fine gentleman, does not take place of the man. Humanity shines in Homer, in Chaucer, in Spenser, in Shakespeare, in Milton. They are content with truth. They use the positive degree. They seem frigid and phlegmatic to those who have been spiced with the frantic passion and violent coloring of inferior but popular writers. For, they are poets by the free course which they allow to the informing soul, which through their eyes beholdeth again and blesses the things which it hath made. The soul is superior to its knowledge, wiser than any of its works. The great poet makes us feel our own wealth, and then we think less of his compositions. His greatest communication to our mind is to teach us to despise all he has done. Shakespeare carries us to such a lofty strain of intelligent activity as to suggest a wealth which beggars his own; and we then feel that the splendid works which he has created, and which in other hours we extol as a sort of self-existent poetry, take no stronger hold of real nature than the shadow of a passing traveler on the rock. The inspiration which uttered itself in Hamlet and Lear could utter things as good from day to day forever. Why then should I make account of Hamlet and Lear, as if we had not the soul from which they fell as syllables from the tongue?

This energy does not descend into individual life on any other condition than entire possession. It comes to the lowly and simple; it comes to whomsoever will put off what is foreign and proud; it comes as insight; it comes as serenity and grandeur. When we see those whom it inhabits, we are apprised of new degrees of greatness. From that inspiration the man comes back with a changed tone. He does not talk with men with an eye to their opinion. He tries them. It requires of us to be plain and true. The vain traveler attempts to embellish his life by quoting my Lord and the Prince and the Countess, who thus said or did to *him*. The ambitious vulgar show you their spoons and brooches

and rings, and preserve their cards and compliments. The more cultivated, in their account of their own experience, cull out the pleasing, poetic circumstance; the visit to Rome, the man of genius they saw; the brilliant friend they know; still further on perhaps the gorgeous landscape, the mountain lights, the mountain thoughts they enjoyed yesterday,—and so seek to throw a romantic color over their life. But the soul that ascendeth to worship the great God is plain and true; has no rose color; no fine friends; no chivalry; no adventures; does not want admiration; dwells in the hour that now is, in the earnest experience of the common day,—by reason of the present moment and the mere trifle having become porous to thought and bibulous of the sea of light.

Converse with a mind that is grandly simple, and literature looks like word-catching. The simplest utterances are worthiest to be written, yet are they so cheap and so things of course, that in the infinite riches of the soul it is like gathering a few pebbles off the ground, or bottling a little air in a phial, when the whole earth and the whole atmosphere are ours. The mere author in such society is like a pickpocket among gentlemen, who has come in to steal a gold button or a pin. Nothing can pass there, or make you one of the circle, but the casting aside your trappings and dealing man to man in naked truth, plain confession and omniscient affirmation.

Souls such as these treat you as gods would, walk as gods in the earth, accepting without any admiration your wit, your bounty, your virtue even, say rather your act of duty, for your virtue they own as their proper blood, royal as themselves, and over-royal, and the father of the gods. But what rebuke their plain fraternal bearing casts on the mutual flattery with which authors solace each other and wound themselves! These flatter not. I do not wonder that these men go to see Cromwell and Christina and Charles the II. and James I. and the Grand Turk. For they are, in their own elevation, the fellows of kings, and must feel the servile tone of conversation in the world. They must always be a godsend to princes, for they confront them, a king to a king, without ducking or concession, and give a high nature the refreshment and satisfaction of resistance, of plain humanity, of even companionship and of new ideas. They leave them wiser and superior men. Souls like these make us feel that

sincerity is more excellent than flattery. Deal so plainly with man and woman as to constrain the utmost sincerity and destroy all hope of trifling with you. It is the highest compliment you can pay. Their "highest praising," said Milton, "is not flattery, and their plainest advice is a kind of praising."

Ineffable is the union of man and God in every act of the soul. The simplest person who in his integrity worships God, becomes God; yet for ever and ever the influx of this better and universal self is new and unsearchable. Ever it inspires awe and astonishment. How dear, how soothing to man, arises the idea of God, peopling the lonely place, effacing the scars of our mistakes and disappointments! When we have broken our god of tradition and ceased from our god of rhetoric, then may God fire the heart with his presence. It is the doubling of the heart itself, nay, the infinite enlargement of the heart with a power of growth to a new infinity on every side. It inspires in man an infallible trust. He has not the conviction, but the sight, that the best is the true, and may in that thought easily dismiss all particular uncertainties and fears, and adjourn to the sure revelation of time the solution of his private riddles. He is sure that his welfare is dear to the heart of being. In the presence of law to his mind he is overflowed with a reliance so universal that it sweeps away all cherished hopes and the most stable projects of mortal condition in its flood. He believes that he cannot escape from his good. The things that are really for thee gravitate to thee. You are running to seek your friend. Let your feet run, but your mind need not. If you do not find him, will you not acquiesce that it is best you should not find him? for there is a power, which as it is in you, is in him also, and could therefore very well bring you together, if it were for the best. You are preparing with eagerness to go and render a service to which your talent and your taste invite you, the love of men and the hope of fame. Has it not occurred to you that you have no right to go, unless you are equally willing to be prevented from going? O, believe, as thou livest, that every sound that is spoken over the round world, which thou oughtest to hear, will vibrate on thine ear. Every proverb, every book, every by-word that belongs to thee for aid or comfort, shall surely come home through open or winding passages. Every friend whom not thy fantastic will but the great and tender heart in thee

craveth, shall lock thee in his embrace. And this because the heart in thee is the heart of all; not a valve, not a wall, not an intersection is there anywhere in nature, but one blood rolls uninterruptedly an endless circulation through all men, as the water of the globe is all one sea, and, truly seen, its tide is one.

Let man then learn the revelation of all nature and all thought to his heart; this, namely: that the Highest dwells with him; that the sources of nature are in his own mind, if the sentiment of duty is there. But if he would know what the great God speaketh, he must "go into his closet and shut the door," as Jesus said. God will not make himself manifest to cowards. He must greatly listen to himself, withdrawing himself from all the accents of other men's devotion. Their prayers even are hurtful to him, until he have made his own. Our religion vulgarly stands on numbers of believers. Whenever the appeal is made, —no matter how indirectly,—to numbers, proclamation is then and there made that religion is not. He that finds God a sweet enveloping thought to him never counts his company. When I sit in that presence, who shall dare to come in? When I rest in perfect humility, when I burn with pure love, what can Calvin or Swedenborg say?

It makes no difference whether the appeal is to numbers or to one. The faith that stands on authority is not faith. The reliance on authority measures the decline of religion, the withdrawal of the soul. The position men have given to Jesus, now for many centuries of history, is a position of authority. It characterizes themselves. It cannot alter the eternal facts. Great is the soul, and plain. It is no flatterer, it is no follower; it never appeals from itself. It always believes in itself. Before the immense possibilities of man all mere experience, all past biography, however spotless and sainted, shrinks away. Before that holy heaven which our presentiments foreshow us, we cannot easily praise any form of life we have seen or read of. We not only affirm that we have few great men, but, absolutely speaking, that we have none; that we have no history, no record of any character or mode of living that entirely contents us. The saints and demigods whom history worships we are constrained to accept with a grain of allowance. Though in our lonely hours we draw a new strength out of their memory, yet, pressed on our attention, as they are by the thoughtless and customary, they fatigue and

invade. The soul gives itself, alone, original and pure, to the Lonely, Original and Pure, who, on that condition, gladly inhabits, leads and speaks through it. Then is it glad, young and nimble. It is not wise, but it sees through all things. It is not called religious, but it is innocent. It calls the light its own, and feels that the grass grows and the stone falls by a law inferior to, and dependent on, its nature. Behold, it saith, I am born into the great, the universal mind. I, the imperfect, adore my own Perfect. I am somehow receptive of the great soul, and thereby I do overlook the sun and the stars and feel them to be but the fair accidents and effects which change and pass. More and more the surges of everlasting nature enter into me, and I become public and human in my regards and actions. So come I to live in thoughts and act with energies which are immortal. Thus revering the soul, and learning, as the ancient said, that "its beauty is immense," man will come to see that the world is the perennial miracle which the soul worketh, and be less astonished at particular wonders; he will learn that there is no profane history; that all history is sacred; that the universe is represented in an atom, in a moment of time. He will weave no longer a spotted life of shreds and patches, but he will live with a divine unity. He will cease from what is base and frivolous in his own life and be content with all places and any service he can render. He will calmly front the morrow in the negligency of that trust which carries God with it and so hath already the whole future in the bottom of the heart.

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

1706-1790

One of the greatest figures in the early days of the American republic. Born in Boston. By his integrity and hard work he gradually acquired tremendous power and influence. Acted in various capacities for the government, notably as ambassador to France, where his knowledge, especially on scientific subjects, created a very favorable impression of the possibilities of America. He was editor, author, scientist, inventor, statesman, and philosopher, and in each of these roles displayed unique powers of mind.

### A DIALOGUE WITH THE GOUT

**F**RANKLIN: Eh! Oh! Eh! What have I done to merit these cruel sufferings?

*Gout:* Many things; you have ate and drank too freely, and too much indulged those legs of yours in their indolence.

*Franklin:* Who is it that accuses me?

*Gout:* It is I, even I, the Gout.

*Franklin:* What! my enemy in person?

*Gout:* No, not your enemy.

*Franklin:* I repeat it; my enemy; for you would not only torment my body to death, but ruin my good name; you reproach me as a glutton and a tippler; now all the world that knows me will allow that I am neither the one nor the other.

*Gout:* The world may think as it pleases; it is always very complaisant to itself, and sometimes to its friends; but I very well know that the quantity of meat and drink proper for a man who takes a reasonable degree of exercise, would be too much for another, who never takes any.

*Franklin:* I take—Eh! Oh!—as much exercise—Eh!—as I can, Madam Gout. You know my sedentary state, and on that account, it would seem, Madam Gout, as if you might spare me a little, seeing it is not altogether my own fault.

*Gout:* Not a jot; your rhetoric and your politeness are thrown away; your apology avails nothing. If your situation in life is a sedentary one, your amusements, your recreations, at least, should be active. You ought to walk or ride; or, if the weather prevents that, play at billiards. But let us examine your course



of life. While the mornings are long, and you have leisure to go abroad, what do you do? Why, instead of gaining an appetite for breakfast, by salutary exercise, you amuse yourself with books, pamphlets, or newspapers, which commonly are not worth the reading. Yet you eat an inordinate breakfast, four dishes of tea, with cream, and one or two buttered toasts, with slices of hung beef, which I fancy are not things the most easily digested. Immediately afterward you sit down to write at your desk, or converse with persons who apply to you on business. Thus the time passes till one, without any kind of bodily exercise.

But all this I could pardon, in regard, as you say, to your sedentary condition. But what is your practice after dinner? Walking in the beautiful gardens of those friends with whom you have dined would be the choice of men of sense; yours is to be fixed down to chess, where you are found engaged for two or three hours! This is your perpetual recreation, which is the least eligible of any for a sedentary man, because, instead of accelerating the motion of the fluids, the rigid attention it requires helps to retard the circulation and obstruct internal secretions. Wrapped in the speculations of this wretched game, you destroy your constitution. What can be expected from such a course of living but a body replete with stagnant humors, ready to fall a prey to all kinds of dangerous maladies, if I, the Gout, did not occasionally bring you relief by agitating those humors, and so purifying or dissipating them? If it was in some nook or alley in Paris, deprived of walks, that you played awhile at chess after dinner, this might be excusable; but the same taste prevails with you in Passy, Auteuil, Montmartre, or Sanoy, places where there are the finest gardens and walks, a pure air, beautiful women, and most agreeable and instructive conversation; all which you might enjoy by frequenting the walks. But these are rejected for this abominable game of chess. Fie, then, Mr. Franklin! But amidst my instructions, I had almost forgot to administer my wholesome corrections; so take that twinge—and that.

*Franklin:* Oh! Eh! Oh! Ohhh! As much instruction as you please, Madam Gout, and as many reproaches; but pray, Madam, a truce with your corrections!

*Gout:* No, Sir, no—I will not abate a particle of what is so much for your good—therefore—

*Franklin:* Oh! Ehhh!—It is not fair to say I take no exercise, when I do very often, going out to dine and returning in my carriage.

*Gout:* That, of all imaginable exercises, is the most slight and insignificant, if you allude to the motion of a carriage suspended on springs. By observing the degree of heat obtained by different kinds of motion we may form an estimate of the quantity of exercise given by each. Thus, for example, if you turn out to walk in winter with cold feet, in an hour's time you will be in a glow all over; ride on horseback, the same effect will scarcely be perceived by four hours' round trotting; but if you loll in a carriage, such as you have mentioned, you may travel all day, and gladly enter the last inn to warm your feet by a fire. Flatter yourself then no longer that half an hour's airing in your carriage deserves the name of exercise. Providence has appointed few to roll in carriages, while he has given to all a pair of legs, which are machines infinitely more commodious and serviceable. Be grateful, then and make a proper use of yours. Would you know how they forward the circulation of your fluids, in the very action of transporting you from place to place; observe when you walk that all your weight is alternately thrown from the one leg to the other; this occasions a great pressure on the vessels of the foot, and repels their contents; when relieved, by the weight being thrown on the other foot, the vessels of the first are allowed to replenish, and, by a return of this weight, this repulsion again succeeds, thus accelerating the circulation of the blood. The heat produced in any given time depends on the degree of this acceleration; the fluids are shaken, the humors attenuated, the secretions facilitated, and all goes well; the cheeks are ruddy, and health is established. Behold your fair friend at Auteuil; a lady who received from bounteous nature more really useful science than half a dozen of such pretenders to philosophy as you have been able to extract from all your books. When she honors you with a visit, it is on foot. She walks all hours of the day, and leaves indolence, and its concomitant maladies, to be endured by her horses. In this see at once the preservative of her health and personal charms. But when you go to Auteuil, you must have your carriage, though it is no farther from Passy to Auteuil than from Auteuil to Passy.

*Franklin:* Your reasonings grow very tiresome.

*Gout:* I stand corrected. I will be silent and continue my office; take that, and that.

*Franklin:* Oh! Oh! Talk on, I pray you.

*Gout:* No, no; I have a good number of twinges for you to-night, and you may be sure of some more tomorrow.

*Franklin:* What, with such a fever! I shall go distracted. Oh! Eh! Can no one bear it for me?

*Gout:* Ask that of your horses; they have served you faithfully.

*Franklin:* How can you so cruelly sport with my torments?

*Gout:* Sport! I am very serious. I have here a list of offenses against your own health distinctly written, and can justify every stroke inflicted on you.

*Franklin:* Read it then.

*Gout:* It is too long a detail; but I will briefly mention some particulars.

*Franklin:* Proceed. I am all attention.

*Gout:* Do you remember how often you have promised yourself, the following morning, a walk in the grove of Boulogne, in the garden de la Muette, or in your own garden, and have violated your promise, alleging at one time it was too cold, at another too warm, too windy, too moist, or what else you pleased; when in truth it was too nothing but your insuperable love of ease?

*Franklin:* That I confess may have happened occasionally, probably ten times in a year.

*Gout:* Your confession is very far short of the truth; the gross amount is one hundred and ninety-nine times.

*Franklin:* Is it possible?

*Gout:* So possible that it is fact; you may rely on the accuracy of my statement. You know Mr. Brillion's gardens, and what fine walks they contain; you know the handsome flight of a hundred steps, which lead from the terrace above to the lawn below. You have been in the practice of visiting this amiable family twice a week, after dinner, and it is a maxim of your own, that "a man may take as much exercise in walking a mile up and down stairs as in ten on level ground." What an opportunity was here for you to have had exercise in both these ways! Did you embrace it, and how often?

*Franklin:* I can not immediately answer that question.

*Gout:* I will do it for you; not once.

*Franklin:* Not once?

*Gout:* Even so. During the summer you went there at six o'clock. You found the charming lady, with her lovely children and friends, eager to walk with you, and entertain you with their agreeable conversation; and what has been your choice? Why, to sit on the terrace, satisfying yourself with the fine prospect, and passing your eye over the beauties of the garden below, without taking one step to descend and walk about in them.

On the contrary, dear sir, you call for tea and the chess-board; and lo! you are occupied in your seat till nine o'clock, and that besides two hours' play after dinner; and then, instead of walking home, which would have bestirred you a little, you step into your carriage. How absurd to suppose that all this carelessness can be reconcilable with health, without my interposition!

*Franklin:* I am convinced now of the justness of Poor Richard's remark that "Our debts and our sins are always greater than we think for."

*Gout:* So it is. You philosophers are sages in your maxims, and fools in your conduct.

*Franklin:* But do you charge, among my crimes, that I return in a carriage from Mr. Brillon's?

*Gout:* Certainly; for having been seated all the while, you can not object the fatigue of the day, and can not want, therefore, the relief of a carriage.

*Franklin:* What, then, would you have me do with my carriage?

*Gout:* Burn it, if you choose; you would at least get heat out of it once in this way, or, if you dislike that proposal, here's another for you: observe the poor peasants, who work in the vineyards and grounds about the villages of Passy, Auteuil, Chaillot, etc.; you may find every day, among these deserving creatures, four or five old men and women, bent and perhaps crippled by weight of years and too long and too great labor. After a most fatiguing day, these people have to trudge a mile or two to their smoky huts. Order your coachman to set them down. This is an act that will be good for your soul; and, at the same time, after your visit to the Brillons, if you return on foot, that will be good for your body.

*Franklin:* Ah! how tiresome you are!

*Gout:* Well, then, to my office; it should not be forgotten that I am your physician. There.

*Franklin:* Ohhh! what a devil of a physician!

*Gout:* How ungrateful you are to say so! Is it not I who, in the character of your physician, have saved you from the palsy, dropsy and apoplexy; one or other of which would have done for you long ago but for me.

*Franklin:* I submit, and thank you for the past, but entreat the discontinuance of your visits for the future; for, in my mind, one had better die than be cured so dolefully. Permit me just to hint that I have also not been unfriendly to you. I never feed physician or quack of any kind, to enter the list against you; if, then, you do not leave me to my repose, it may be said you are ungrateful, too.

*Gout:* I can scarcely acknowledge that as any objection. As to quacks, I despise them; they may kill you, indeed, but can not injure me. And as to regular physicians, they are at last convinced that the gout, in such a subject as you are, is no disease, but a remedy; and wherefore cure a remedy?—but to our business—there.

*Franklin:* Oh! Oh!—for Heaven's sake leave me; and I promise faithfully never more to play at chess, but to take exercise daily, and live temperately.

*Gout:* I know you too well. You promise fair; after a few months of good health you will return to your old habits; your fine promises will be forgotten like the forms of the last year's clouds. Let us then finish the account, and I will go. But leave you with an assurance of visiting you again at a proper time and place; for my object is your good, and you are sensible now that I am your real friend.

## JOHN BURROUGHS

John Burroughs, essayist and naturalist, was born at Roxbury, New York, in 1837. For a number of years he was in the government service, but since 1874 has lived on a farm, as his chief interests are in literature and nature study.

### FEATHERED LIFE IN AMERICA

**Y**EARS ago, when quite a youth, I was rambling in the woods one Sunday with my brothers, gathering black-birch, winter-greens, etc., when, as we reclined upon the ground, gazing vaguely up into the trees, I caught sight of a bird that paused a moment on a branch above me, the like of which I had never before seen or heard of. It was probably the blue yellow-backed warbler, as I have since found this to be a common bird in those woods; but to my young fancy it seemed like some fairy bird, so curiously marked was it, and so new and unexpected. It seemed like an integral part of the green beech woods. I saw it a moment as the flickering leaves parted, noted the white spot in its wing, and it was gone. How the thought of it clung to me afterwards! It was a revelation. It was the first intimation I had that the woods we knew so well held birds that we knew not at all. Were our eyes and ears so dull, then? There was the robin, the blue-jay, the blue-bird, the yellow-bird, the cherry-bird, the cat-bird, the chipping-bird, the woodpecker, the high-hole, an occasional red-bird, and a few others, in the woods or along their borders, but who ever dreamed that there were still others that not even the hunters saw, and whose names no one had ever heard?

When, one summer day later in life, I took my gun and went to the woods again in a different, though perhaps a less simple, spirit, I found my youthful vision more than realized. There were indeed other birds, plenty of them, singing, nesting, breeding, among the familiar trees, which I had before passed by unheard and unseen.

It was a surprise that awaits every student of ornithology, and the thrill of delight that accompanies it, and the feeling of fresh, eager inquiry that follows, can hardly be awakened by any other pursuit. Take the first step in ornithology, procure one new speci-

men, and you are ticketed for the whole voyage. There is a fascination about it quite overpowering. It fits so well with other things—with fishing, hunting, farming, walking, camping-out—with all that takes one to the fields and woods. One may go a blackberrying and make some rare discovery; or, while driving his cow to pasture, hear a new song, or make a new observation. Secrets lurk on all sides. There is news in every bush. Expectation is ever on tip-toe. What no man ever saw before may the next moment be revealed to you. What a new interest the woods have! How you long to explore every nook and corner of them! You would even find consolation in being lost in them. You could then hear the night birds and the owls, and in your wanderings might stumble upon some unknown specimen.

In all excursions to the woods or to the shore, the student of ornithology has an advantage over his companions. He has one more resource, one more avenue of delight. He, indeed, kills two birds with one stone, and sometimes three. If others wander, he can never go out of his way. His game is everywhere. The cawing of a crow makes him feel at home, while a new note or a new song drowns all care. Audubon, on the desolate coast of Labrador, is happier than any king ever was and on shipboard is nearly cured of his sea-sickness when a new gull appears in sight. One must taste it to understand or appreciate its fascination.







